THE HISTORY OF RUHLEBEN

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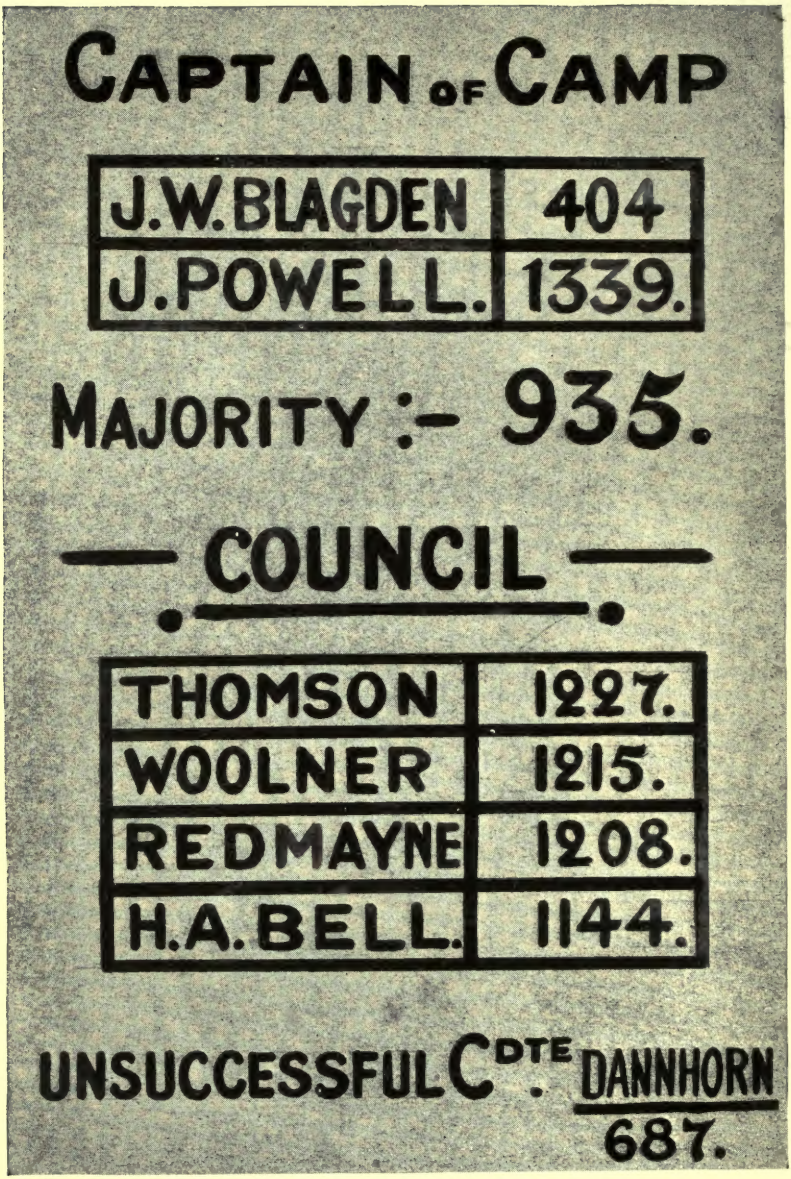
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THE HISTORY OF RUHLEBEN

A RECORD OF BRITISH ORGANISATION IN A PRISON CAMP IN GERMANY

by JOSEPH POWELL [*Captain of the Camp*]
and FRANCIS GRIBBLE

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PREFACE

'You mustn't suppose that the camp was always like this. When the men were first brought here, the place wasn't fit to keep pigs in. All that you have admired in the camp they have themselves created.'

That is what Count Schwerin, Commandant of Ruhleben, said, some time in the summer of 1916, to a distinguished American visitor who had called on him with an introduction from the American Embassy. It was the generous tribute of an enemy whom Ruhleben men had ceased to think of as an enemy before he died. This book is written to set forth, in detail, the facts on which it was based, and to show how a number of Englishmen, raked in from the German cities, dumped in a swamp, and housed in stables, set to work to found a British colony and build a British city within a few miles of the enemy's capital, and to place on record the hard work done by many men in many different departments of endeavour.

Mr Powell was pressed to write such a book at the time of the Ruhleben Exhibition. Mr Gribble was, at the same time, contemplating the publication of his personal recollections of the camp in the early days when the great colonising effort was still in its infancy. Each of the two had amassed a great deal of material which would have been very useful to the other.

Mr Powell's material consisted mainly of official records —the minutes of the meetings of the barrack captains, and various sub-committees charged with various branches of civil administration; Mr Gribble's mainly of descriptive notes made while his memory of the scenes and incidents to be described was still fresh. It was therefore suggested, and, after some discussion, arranged, that the two projected books, instead of competing with each other, should be fused in a single narrative, more complete than either author could have written separately.

The division of labour and responsibility will be found to be, in a general way, indicated in the course of the book. Mr Gribble has no first-hand knowledge of anything that happened in the camp after the autumn of 1915, when he was exchanged to England with other prisoners unfit for military service, or of the work of the civil administration, with which he was not connected. On these latter matters, therefore, it seemed better that Mr Powell should speak in the first person, taking the opportunity of stating facts which it was not practicable to state while the camp was still in being. The early descriptive matter, except where it is specifically attributed to Mr Powell, is mainly Mr Gribble's. The chapters on the medical history of Ruhleben are mainly based on his separate observations and inquiries; and it is he who speaks in the first person in the chapters on literature and journalism at Ruhleben.

It only remains for the authors to express their hearty

thanks to many fellow prisoners for their generous response to requests for information, and to acknowledge a special indebtedness to the editors and contributors of the various magazines published in the camp. The records therein preserved of the camp sports and entertainments, as well as other matters connected with its history, have been freely drawn upon.

Mr Powell's acknowledgments of the practical help which he received from many representatives of the American Embassy and the Netherlands Legation, and from innumerable collaborators in the camp, will be found scattered about the pages which follow, but may be repeated here. The number of enthusiastic helpers was so large that it is to be feared that some which ought to have been mentioned have been inadvertently omitted. If that is so, the authors here tender their apologies for an oversight which was purely accidental.

J.P.
F.G.

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CHAPTER I

HOW WE WERE BROUGHT TO RUHLEBEN—DESCRIPTION OF THE CAMP AND ITS DISCOMFORTS—INTERNED IN A STABLE—THE EARLY GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS CIVIL PRISONERS

RUHLEBEN was used as a place of internment on a small scale from the very beginning of the war. The men sent there were largely those who had drawn attention to themselves, by their punctilious correctitude, in consulting the authorities as to the way in which it behoved them to order their lives. The authorities had then decided to order their lives for them. There were about forty of them; and they shared the location assigned to them with a number of Russian and Polish refugees of both sexes. A good deal of onerous and disagreeable fatigue duty was imposed on them; but the discipline, on the whole, was lax. There was none of that bullying and brutality which, at the same period, marked the *régime* of the unspeakable Major Bach at Sennelager. The prisoners were even taken for country walks, and found opportunities of refreshing themselves at wayside cafés. The soldiers in charge of them drank beer at their expense, and relations were thus kept on a fairly friendly footing.

The real and memorable history of Ruhleben began later, with the issue of the decree that all male British subjects, except clergymen, doctors, lunatics, and

bed-ridden invalids, between the ages of seventeen and fifty-five, and all British officers of whatever age, whether on the active or the retired lists, should be arrested on the 6th November, 1914, and taken to the internment camp which would be selected for them. Even so, it was not to Ruhleben that all of them were brought. Those who were already at Sennelager were left there; and a number of others were interned at Celle. The majority of them, however, came streaming into Ruhleben by many roads from all parts of the country, in the course of the first and second weeks of November; and the treatment meted out to them during their preliminary imprisonment, and during the course of their journey, might, if space permitted, form the subject of a special and weighty indictment.

A few—a very few—were treated with consideration, allowed to travel to their destination in comfort, and given opportunities of procuring provisions by the way. But these cases were rare exceptions. It was commonly believed that orders had been given 'from above' that British civilians were to be treated on the same lines as convicts on their way to penal settlements; and many men reported experiences which fully bore out that impression. Apart from those who, for special but generally frivolous reasons, had been kept in solitary confinement, there were some who had been driven about ignominiously in Black Marias, others who had been required to carry their own luggage through the streets amid the jeers of the populace, and a vast number who had been kept for long periods without food. One

party, indeed, were actually told, in so many words, by the Prussian officer directing their movements, that they were to be classed with criminals, that criminals were entitled to one meal only a day, and that that meal consisted only of bread and water. The sailors, as is well known, had been herded on the filthy Hamburg hulks.

As regards the so-called 'camp' into which about 4000 [1] men were thus shepherded, here is one collaborator's summary of his recollections :—

'The place is a trotting race-course, with appurtenances, situated a few miles from Berlin. The principal buildings are three grand-stands, a restaurant known as the " tea-house," a club-house known as the Casino, residential quarters and offices for various functionaries, and eleven stables—one of them built of wood and bricks, and the others of brick and concrete. These stables served as barracks for the prisoners, who were housed both in the horse-boxes (some of which were full of dung when they arrived) and in the lofts, normally used for storing fodder. Subsequently, as the number of the prisoners increased, supplementary wooden barracks were hastily run up.

'The floors and the walls of both the lofts and the boxes were of concrete. At first, the prisoners had to sleep on these concrete floors, on which an inadequate provision of straw, not over clean, was strewn. After an interval, straw sacks—called, by courtesy, mattresses

[1] The largest number of men present in the camp at any one time was about 4400. The total number of men passed through the camp was approximately 5500.

[2] This does not apply to all the barracks. In some of them beds had been provided.

—were supplied; after a further interval, the occupants of the boxes were provided with plank beds. One blanket—usually, in fact, a worn and dilapidated horse-cloth—was each man's official allowance of bed-clothes, though winter was already setting in; any other protection from the cold which any man needed he had to furnish at his own expense. Into each of the horse-boxes, about eleven feet square, six men were crowded. The men in the dimly-lighted lofts were packed, shoulder to shoulder, all round the walls, and also up and down the middle; and in this confined space they had to live, sleep, eat, keep all their spare clothes and changes of linen, and dry their washing on improvised clothes-lines stretched from beam to beam.[1]

'Access to the actual race-course was, at first, strictly forbidden, men being allowed to walk and take exercise only in the stable yards, which were unpaved. The soil was a dry, loose, dirty sand, which rain quickly transformed into mud. There was no surface drainage; and as there was a great deal of rain in the late autumn of 1914, the camp was generally a cold quagmire, swept by piercing winds from Poland and the Pinsk marshes, and interspersed with puddles, which swelled until they became lakes. Through this morass men had to wade, three times a day, for a distance of at least a quarter of a mile, to fetch their food from kitchens installed underneath the grand-stands. Naturally, too, they had

[1] The drying of clothes in the barracks was nominally forbidden; but as the clothes needed to be dried, and there were no facilities for drying them elsewhere, the prohibition was not always enforced.

to traverse the same morass in order to reach the military latrines which had been dug for them; latrines which the American Ambassador once described as 'a danger not only to the camp but to Berlin,' and in which no disinfectants were ever used except those which the prisoners subscribed to purchase.'

That description, however, though accurate as far as it goes, is not complete. The author of it, being arrested at some distance from Berlin, was not one of the first arrivals, and did not witness the opening scenes. Mr Powell, who was living in Berlin, and was taken to Ruhleben on the very day of his arrest, is able to add some supplementary particulars. He was one of those threatened with the indignity of being marched publicly through the Berlin streets; but after having been told that prisoners 'had no right to taxis,' he succeeded, by strenuous protest, in obtaining permission to make the journey by taxi, at his own expense, with landsturm men, armed to the teeth, sitting in the front of the conveyance. A few other prisoners—three taxi-loads of them in all—shared his privilege; but the majority of them had to walk; and it was to their great joy that an impudent German spectator, believed to have been a newspaper reporter, pressing too close to them in his curiosity, became entangled in the procession, was dragged through the camp gates together with them, and shared their discomforts for a day and a night before he succeeded in establishing his identity and obtaining his release.

On the subject of the accommodation Mr Powell writes :—

'We found boxes available in Stable No. 10. There were twenty-seven of these boxes, each measuring about eleven feet square and containing six iron field bedsteads, three fitted on top of each other. On each bedstead there lay a coarse straw sack, a straw pillow, and two blankets. It was not for long, however, that we were allowed to retain two blankets per head. As more prisoners were brought in, the Germans discovered that they had not blankets enough to go round. Then each of us was required to give up one of his two blankets; and a little later, any man who had brought a rug or other covering of his own had to surrender both his military blankets.'

In this stable, designed to accommodate twenty-seven horses, 365 men were expected to find room. They could do so only by covering the whole of the floor of the loft with straw-sacks, leaving no gangways at all. Other facts which the reader who desires a faithful picture of the original condition of the camp must realise are these :—

1. No arrangements whatever had been made for heating the stables, and the arrangements for lighting them were grossly inadequate. Such lights as there were hung in the stable corridors; but very little light penetrated from them into the boxes for the

simple reason that the walls of these were about nine feet high, with an open space of little more than 2¼ feet between them and the ceiling.

2. Washing facilities were scandalously insufficient. The 365 men in Barrack X.—and the case was typical—were expected to share two taps and fifteen earthenware bowls, and to parade, washed and dressed, at six-thirty a.m.

3. The distribution of articles ordinarily deemed necessary to decent living was on the same mean scale. There was given to every man a coarse towel of the texture of an English dish-cloth, a tin bowl to hold his food—and absolutely nothing else : no knife, no spoon or fork, or drinking-cup, or plate—not even a cake of soap. There was a canteen at which these articles, and certain others, could be purchased; but the men without money—and there were a great many in that state—were left to wash without soap, to eat with their fingers, and to drink by putting their mouths to the tap.

4. The order exempting sick men from internment had been more honoured in the breach than the observance. Sufferers from tuberculosis, bronchitis, cancer, rheumatism, and various unpleasant skin diseases were pitilessly mixed with the rest; and so were the half-witted and the cripples. There were several men who went about the camp on crutches; and there were some who could not walk, but had to get their friends to carry them, whenever they left their dormitory for any purpose whatsoever.

A portion of these shortcomings (though not the worst of them) may be attributed to the fact that the Germans had underestimated the number of civilians for whom they would have to provide. It was the first of the many defects in their boasted 'organisation' which the Ruhleben prisoners discovered. The practical consequence of the miscalculation was that, as men continued to stream into the camp from all ends of Germany—sailors from Hamburg and invalids from the health resorts, as well as the duly registered residents —accommodation had to be improvised for them in quarters which they had not originally been intended to occupy. Immense stores of vegetables had to be cleared out of the Tea House in order that it might serve as a dormitory for the Hamburg merchants; while the men from South Germany—including the patients from Bad Nauheim, many of whom had come for treatment from places as remote as South Africa—were assigned to stables which, when the camp was inaugurated, were still occupied by the horses. This is Mr Powell's description of the opening of Barrack VII.—eventually known to the camp as 'the millionaires' barrack' on account of the number of wealthy invalids who were billeted in it :—

'The floors of this stable were still covered with manure. Even sick men were called upon to clear the manure out, and scrub the floors; but they were not provided—or, at all events, very few of them were provided—with either shovels or brooms These utensils

they had either to borrow or to dispense with. Their task accomplished, they were paraded in the emigration station, just outside the camp, in which they had been provisionally lodged, marched to their new home, and told to settle down in it, six in a box, though the floors were still wet, and neither bedsteads nor even straw had been provided. I helped them to sort themselves; and I still have a vivid recollection of one of the scenes which I witnessed. I pulled back the heavy sliding iron door of one of the horse-boxes, to see whether any one had taken possession of it. There were revealed four bare concrete walls, a bare concrete floor, and a small flap window, about nine feet from the ground, and two silent men standing in two of the corners, each with a suit-case at his feet, and a look of despondent perplexity on his face. I closed the door and withdrew. Half an hour later, I returned, bringing four other men to share their shelter. The two original occupants were still standing there, in the same attitude, and in the same dazed bewilderment.

'We fetched them what straw could be spared from some of the other barracks; but it was not until the next day that they were able to get more than a thin sprinkling of it; and it was not until after the lapse of several days that they were given straw-sacks and pillows.'

That scene, like the other scenes described, illustrates the normal attitude of the Germans towards the English at that date. It cannot be said that the commandant

was specially to blame—he was an elderly gentleman, baffled by a problem of which he had had no previous experience, kind-hearted, though hopelessly incompetent. But the feeling which pervaded Germany, as well as the camp, was that anything was good enough for Englishmen. 'White' Englishmen and 'coloured' Englishmen were then all one to the Germans—all alike must be rounded up like cattle and kept in pens.[1] A Press campaign, launched by Karl Peters—the German who achieved fame by flogging women in East Africa—had been deliberately organised for the stimulation of such sentiments; and the victims of the wave of hatred realised that only by their own organisation, their own policy, and their own pressure, could they hope to achieve any amelioration of their lot.

It is a matter of history that the organisation was formed, the policy framed, the pressure applied, and the result accomplished. The details shall be given in the succeeding chapters. Meanwhile there may be presented here two other scenes, separated by an interval of four years, which sum up and symbolise most of the differences which those four years made.

Some time in November, 1914, a group of Ruhleben prisoners were gathered in a shed, denouncing the nature of things in general and Germans in particular. They were cold and hungry, and the mud covered their ankles; but at least they had a partial shelter from the searching wind. One of them pulled out of his pocket

[1] It was some time before the coloured prisoners were given a separate barrack.



The King, Queen and Princess Mary Inspecting the Model of Ruhleben Camp.

and handed round a letter which a German lady had written. It was obviously the letter of a woman of education, and the gist of it was that it rejoiced the writer's heart to hear that English civilian prisoners were to be given only the bare necessaries of life, because that was all that they deserved.

That, be it noted, at a date at which Germany was amply provided with all the necessaries of life! The ideal then was that English prisoners should be starved while Germans lived in plenty. The second scene belongs to the same month of the year 1918.

The Revolution had then broken out, and men were able to spend their days outside the camp. A friend of the writers then walked out of the camp, with a parcel under his arm—a small packet of food which he wished to send to his wife who was residing near Cologne. Within a short distance of the gate a German lady spoke to him. She was quite obviously a lady—well-dressed, and of refined manners and accent, though of a ghastly pallor. 'Forgive me,' she said. 'Of course I oughtn't to speak to you. But I'm so hungry, and I know you have food in your camp there. Could you —could you—for the love of God and humanity, spare me a few biscuits? For my children, you know—they are starving. I should be eternally grateful to you if you would help me.'

The prisoner did what he could for her, lifted his hat, and passed on, leaving her dissolved in tears; and in those two stories we have the history of the war, as well as the history of Ruhleben, in a nutshell.

CHAPTER II

ELECTION OF BARRACK CAPTAINS—THE CAPTAINS' COMMITTEE —ORGANISATION OF A POLICE FORCE—THE BEGINNINGS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT—RELATIONS WITH THE AMERICAN EMBASSY—THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR'S FIRST VISIT TO THE CAMP—PROMISE OF IMPROVED CONDITIONS

THE beginnings of the administrative services at Ruhleben were of the simplest. Neither on the German nor on the English side was their eventual development foreseen when, on November 8, 1914, the prisoners were paraded and informed that each barrack would be required to elect an interpreter, fluent in both languages, to represent them in their relations with the authorities. The elections thus improvised were quite informally conducted, and the following representatives were chosen :—

Barrack I.	Mr Trinks.
Barrack II.	Mr J. Swift.
Barrack III.	Dr Dexheimer.
Barrack IV.	Mr Nicholson.
Barrack VIII. . . .	Captain Russell.
Barrack IX. . . .	Mr N. Robson.
Barrack X.	Mr Jospeh Powell.
Barrack XI. . . .	Mr J. H. Thorpe.
Emigration Station . .	Mr W. Ellison.
Grand-stand	Mr C. Aman.

Other representatives chosen as the other barracks filled up were :—

Barrack V.	Mr Cocker.
Barrack VI.	Dr Katz.
Barrack VII. . . .	Mr C. Hallam.
Tea House	Mr L. G. Beaumont.

That was the nucleus. Whether much or little was to come of it depended upon the seriousness with which the men thus brought, on no very clear or intelligible principle, but almost by accident, to the front, took their functions. If they had been unduly modest and retiring, they might long have remained a mere group of unrelated spokesmen-interpreters; but that was not their policy. Realising that union was strength, they proceeded to form themselves into a committee. Informal conversations conducted in the course of November 9, resulted in the calling of two committee meetings on the following day—one at 9.0 a.m., and the other at 3.30 p.m. It was arranged to keep minutes; and Mr Powell contributes from the minute book the following summary of the matters disposed of at the first meeting :—

Privileges.—It was arranged to apply for permission for the captains' representative to use the telephone.

Latrines.—A fund was created out of which men were to be paid to keep the latrines clean.

Sailors' Baggage.—As the 1500 sailors brought from

Hamburg had not been allowed to bring any of their baggage with them, the captains undertook to see that the baggage was conveyed to the camp.

Elections.—Mr Trinks was unanimously elected captain of the camp, and Mr Powell was unanimously elected vice-captain.

Clothing.—The need of clothing for the destitute prisoners was discussed.

Hospital Treatment.—It was decided that this matter should be investigated.

Supplies.—It was decided to seek permission to get certain necessaries brought to the camp.

Relief.—It was decided to consider means of procuring money for the relief of the destitute.

Possible Releases.—Note was taken of the instruction of the German military authorities that lists were to be made out, by the following morning, of sailors under seventeen years of age, over forty-five years of age, and over fifty-five years of age.

The record, uninteresting perhaps in itself, shows that, from the very outset, the captains were resolved to let slip no opportunity which might present itself of getting the administration of the camp into their own hands. Up to a point, it was obviously to the convenience of the authorities that, if they were capable of doing so, they should do so; and a good deal of administrative machinery was erected without obstruction or delay. The captains—the word was the camp's spontaneous translation of the German *Obmann*, which

really means a good deal less than captain—appointed vice-captains in each barrack (and also in each loft) to relieve them of some of the routine duties of their office. They further appointed postmen, cashiers, firemen, and laundrymen; they raised a barrack revenue—a small sum to be expended in the purchase of brooms and pails and the payment of wages to the men who accepted the responsibility of keeping the barracks clean; and they organised a police force.

The decision to raise this force was taken at 11 a.m. on November 13. The task of raising it, deputed to Mr Powell, was completed by 4 p.m. on the same day. The office of Inspector was accepted by Mr C. S. Butchart, whom the outbreak of war had found acting as professional to the West End Golf Club. He filled the post as if he had been trained for it; and there is a concurrence of testimony that he came to look more and more like a police inspector as the years went by. The sergeants were Captains Alcide and Stewart—both master mariners; and the constables originally numbered twenty, though as many as sixty were eventually enrolled. There was hardly any police duty, from the regulation of the traffic to the direction of a lost property office, which they did not undertake. Like professional constables, they had their spells of night duty as well as day duty, and had to be at their posts in all weathers. On more than one occasion they showed the German soldiers how to clear a course quickly; and they were specially effective in preventing fights and regulating queues. It once happened that the Camp Officer, Baron

von Taube, in a fit of caprice or temper—provoked by the complaints of some pro-German prisoners who objected to the discipline of the queue—disbanded the force; but it was missed so badly that he speedily relented and re-enrolled it.

Such were the modest beginnings of a policy deliberately directed to getting the work of administration, as far as possible, out of the hands of the German non-commissioned officers and into the hands of the prisoners themselves; and a fact which should be mentioned here is that Mr Trinks was released in January, 1915, whereupon Mr Powell was elected captain of the camp[1] in his place, and Mr Beaumont succeeded Mr Powell as vice-captain, the work of organisation continuing without interruption.

Presently, however, there arrived a stage at which progress became difficult and proceeded too slowly for the satisfaction of the impatient. Perhaps it was, even then, proceeding more rapidly than the impatient thought; but the results of the steps which were being taken were not immediately apparent. The impatient, therefore, decided to agitate and even to act. Not all the captains, they argued, had been freely elected—some of them had been nominated by Baron von Taube. Was not their position, they asked, a shade too like that of Prussian functionaries? Would it not be useful for the camp to elect a more popular body, responsible only

1 The chairman of the captains' committee was always styled captain of the captains,—the English translation, accepted by the Germans, of the title 'Oberobmann des Lagers.'

to its electorate, and standing towards the captains somewhat in the relation in which the Reichstag stands towards the German Ministers of State? Answering these questions in the affirmative, they arranged for the election of a so-called Camp Committee, with that end in view.

It was, at first, a secret committee of which the authorities suspected the existence, without being able to obtain any exact information about it. The members used to meet, like a gang of conspirators, in a corner of one of the lofts, illuminating their proceedings and keeping their minutes by the light of a single tallow candle stuck in a bottle. Candles, at that time, were not allowed; and non-commissioned officers were constantly on the prowl to detect breaches of the regulation. Great precautions had, therefore, to be taken; and the picture which the reader must be asked to conjure up is that of a grave group of college dons, justices of the peace, Hamburg merchants, and officers of the mercantile marine, transacting mysterious business in the semi-darkness, and then suddenly 'dowsing the glim' because the sailor boy who kept 'cave' for them had reported that a corporal was coming up the stairs.

Having thus matured its plans, the committee introduced itself to Baron von Taube, who consented to recognise it and negotiate with it. A second stage was reached when the Baron, in one of those explosions of wrath to which he was addicted, dissolved the committee; a third stage when, without reconstituting

it, he adopted some of its suggestions, and accepted some of its members as barrack captains—Mr Butterworth of Manchester being among those thus promoted. The new movement had its utility as a demonstration that the camp, as a whole, was no less set upon reform than were the captains; and the partial fusion of the two bodies, both of them anxious to deserve well of the community, wound up the incident in a fairly satisfactory manner. The captains, thenceforward, had the field of reform to themselves; and the real era of effective reform began soon after the visit of inspection paid by the American Ambassador on March 3, 1915.

The captains, of course, had been in communication with the Embassy long before that date. To some of the negotiations then conducted it will be necessary to recur in a separate chapter. Here it is to be noted that Mr Trinks used his permission to telephone to such effect that Mr Pine came from the Embassy to look round the camp on November 12, 1914, and was himself allowed to call at the Embassy on November 18. It was felt, however, that a visit from Mr Pine was not enough; and a visit paid, after an interval, by Mr Morgan, the American Consul-General at Hamburg, gave more satisfaction. Being thoroughly disgusted with the sights that he saw, Mr Morgan did not mince his words, but spoke, in the presence of the commandant, the doctor, and sundry of the prisoners, of the iniquity of 'putting men to sleep in that God-damned hole'; and it was no doubt partially

in consequence of what he heard from him, that Mr Gerard decided to brush aside all German opposition, and insist upon looking into the matter for himself.

He came, as it happened, on a day on which the place looked its worst. The weather was awful; a cold wind blowing, and heavy rain alternating with drizzle. The camp was a swamp studded with pools—some of the pools at least knee-deep, and large enough to be called lakes. There were no raised paths—no tracks of any kind; wherever one trod the rain came at least up to one's ankles. Some ambassadors might, in the circumstances, have found an excuse for scamping the inspection; but Mr Gerard did not. He may well have felt cold in his light and elegant spring overcoat; and as he was wearing neat American boots he must certainly have got his feet wet. But that made no difference to his zeal. Attended by the Commandant, the Camp Officer, the doctor, and some of the captains, he went everywhere, and saw everything; and there were those who took very good care that no unpleasant sight escaped his observation. He visited the loft of Barrack VI., where the fetid air suggested the Black Hole of Calcutta; and while he was visiting it, eager messengers ran up and down the camp, assembling the cripples, in order that he might see, when he came out, on what helpless victims the German Government had vented its spite. Men hobbling on crutches and men doubled up with rheumatism were stationed in his path, like the beggars outside a Spanish church; and the following

scrap of conversation on the subject between him and Baron von Taube is said to have been overheard :—

The Ambassador : What are these men doing here? They don't intern cripples like that in England.

The Baron : That I don't believe.

The Ambassador : You don't believe it? But I'm telling you facts, sir—facts which I know to be true; and when I tell you facts which I know to be true, you've got to believe them.

Whether the Baron's scepticism was thus overcome remains uncertain; but Count Schwerin, at the close of the Ambassador's visit, promised speedy redress of several grievances which had been brought to his notice : a fresh supply of straw for the bedding; washing facilities for the new wooden barracks which, as yet, had none; better food; the removal of the latrines to a new site; and the erection of additional barracks to relieve the overcrowding. All this, be it observed, in response to specific representations formulated by the captains at a meeting held on the morning of the same day; and it was further arranged, at the same meeting, that a number of men selected to represent various interests in the camp, should have personal interviews with the Ambassador and lay their special cases before him. The delegates selected were :—

Mr J. W. Lintner—for the Nauheim patients.
Captain Davies—for the seafaring men.

Mr Falk—for the tourists.
Mr Broxop—for the chronic invalids.
Mr Metzger—for the men with German-born wives.
Mr Mackenzie—for the residents in Germany.
Dr Müller—for the pro-Germans.

The description of the last delegate—taken from the captains' minute book—will doubtless strike many readers as curious. An explanation of it will follow on a later page. Here it must suffice to state that the delegates expressed satisfaction at the ready and able manner in which Mr Gerard grasped their several points of view, and to describe the dramatic scenes which marked the close of the memorable day.

While the Ambassador was making his tour his car stood just inside the camp gate. Scores of uncensored notes, telling the bald truth about the camp, were then pitched through the window of the car; and the chauffeur —a born British subject, though naturally assumed by all to be an American—stowed them away beneath the cushions under the protection of the stars and stripes. The back of the car was caked with mud, and a desperate man wrote in the mud with his fingers the message: 'We want bread, Ruhleben.' Other men stood round trying to hide the scrawl from the eyes of the soldiers. One of them nevertheless saw it, and started to rub it out with his cap; but the chauffeur was on to him before he could say 'knife.'

'What are you doing there, God damn you?' he called to him. 'Can't you see that this is an American

car? What the hell do you mean by touching it with your filthy Prussian cap?'

The speech was decidedly unneutral; as unneutral as that of a member of the American Embassy who, at a later date, being told that his expression of his sentiments did seem, somehow or other, to lack neutrality blurted out genially: 'Well, what of that? *We* don't give a damn who whips the Germans, anyhow.' It may be added that, while the tone was more vigorous than that of either Mr Bryan's or Mr Lansing's notes, it was also more effective. The German soldier, alarmed by the volcanic outburst, beat a retreat; and the car still carried the inscription when the Ambassador drove off in it. Ringing cheers followed him; and then, in the silence which fell after the cheers had died away, a voice was heard calling, regardless of what either commandant or camp officer might think :—

'We're starving here, sir. For God's sake send us some bread.'

It was a true statement. The parcels service from England which, in the end, saved the camp from hunger, if not from actual starvation, was still in its infancy; and the men who, unassisted from any outside source, had to live on their rations, got up hungry in the morning and went to bed hungry at night. And that at a time when, the British blockade being as yet ineffective, there still was plenty to eat in the country! The policy, deliberately adopted at that time, of systematically underfeeding prisoners is a thing of which the memory will not be easily effaced—a disgrace

destined to tarnish the German name for generations. Presumably Mr Gerard spoke plainly on the subject when he got back to Berlin; for the era of active reform was inaugurated a few days afterwards—preluded by visits of inspection paid by Excellency von Kessel, Commandant of the Mark of Brandenburg, and Excellency von Boehn, Commandant of Berlin.

Of Von Boehn little if anything was known; but Von Kessel's reputation was such that the prospect of his visit filled the camp with alarm. On the evening before he came, the captains judged it expedient to give out notices warning men to refrain from smoking until after he had gone, as it was not unlikely that, if he saw too many signs of comfort and contentment, he would issue some obnoxious order further curtailing privileges. But these fears, as it happened, turned out to be baseless. Von Kessel, to the general surprise, adopted for once the pose of a man who preferred to see people looking jolly. He sent for some of the cripples, and promised their immediate release; and it is said that he subsequently had a violent row with Von Boehn, whom he ordered to go at once to the camp and see what a disgusting mess he had made of it.

The dispute between the two men is one on which it is obviously impossible for the present writers to arbitrate. They do not know, and have no means of knowing, either what instructions Von Kessel gave to Von Boehn, or what instructions Von Boehn passed on to his own subordinates. It is to be hoped that the matter will be carefully investigated, though the investigation

may be hampered by the fact that Von Kessel is dead. In any case, their visits of inspection were followed by a serious attempt to improve the conditions of the camp; and the fact that they were effected without changes in the camp personnel indicates that Berlin was in no position to throw the blame for past neglect upon the shoulders of local authorities. These would presumably have been able to rebut any charges of excessive severity by reference to their written instructions—which would have been awkward; and it was, indeed, the general experience of those prisoners who had official dealings with them that both the commandant and the camp officer were favourable to reform even at times when Berlin was opposed to it.

CHAPTER III

PRO-GERMANS AMONG THE PRISONERS—THEIR SEPARATION FROM THE OTHER PRISONERS AND RELEGATION TO SEPARATE BARRACKS—ATTEMPT TO ENLIST PRO-GERMAN PRISONERS IN THE GERMAN ARMY—'DEUTSCHFREUNDLICH' AND 'DEUTSCHGESINNT'—OFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF THESE TWO CLASSES

An explanation has been promised of the fact that the captains requested the American Ambassador to receive a delegate representing the pro-Germans.

On the face of it, a prison camp in which Germans were subjecting Englishmen to persecution was not a place in which a pro-German party would have been looked for; but human nature and international relationships are not quite so simple as they seem. The general sentiment of the camp was indubitably expressed by the sailor whose stentorian voice the writer of this passage remembers to have heard bawling, one dismal night, out of a darkness so dense that neither his face nor his figure could be seen: 'These bloody Germans want knocking a hundred miles the other side of hell, and that's where they'll find themselves before we've done with them.' But the majority, though large, which held those views, was not quite overwhelming; and the reason why it was not so must be given fairly.

The solution of the mystery is to be sought in the

difference between the British and German naturalisation laws. German nationality is easy to lose and difficult to acquire. The son of German parents born in England, or in a British colony, or on a British ship, is in German eyes an Englishman, though he may have been brought to Germany in infancy and have lived there ever since. On the other hand, the descendants of British immigrants to Germany do not automatically become German until after the lapse of several generations; and as they can avoid military service by neglecting to apply for naturalisation, they are not much given to applying for it. Scores of such men, looking like Germans, talking like Germans, and behaving like Germans, were raked into Ruhleben in November, 1914. One of them (though he, at any rate, was quickly released) was a distinguished German physician with a large consulting practice in the suburbs of Berlin; another was the brother of one of the *Emden* officers.

Some of these, furious at the indignity put upon them, went about the camp denouncing Germany and the Germans in broken English. 'These ploody Shairmans,' one of them was heard to say, 'vot can't speak von vord of Englisch, zey ought to be put in von baracke by himself.' Others, however, attributed their internment to a misunderstanding which was sure to be put right if they were patient, and did not scruple to say that they hoped to see Germany win the war. Naturally there was friction between them and the real English—*Stock-Engländer*, as the Germans called them, who wanted to see England win the war. It was not,

at first, as acute as might have been expected—perhaps because the common discomfort suggested other topics of conversation; but it became more and more acute as time progressed, and finally came to a head in this way :—

The pro-Germans were so numerous that a special service of praise and prayer, conducted in the German language, was arranged for them in the hall under the grand-stand; and the grand-stand itself was cleared at the hour of the service, in order that their devotional exercises might not be interrupted by the trampling of feet overhead. Some of the sailors objected, and seized the opportunity of expressing their frank opinion of the Germans by applying to them an epithet in frequent use in nautical circles, though not confined to them. Some of the German worshippers overheard and understood the epithet, and boiled with rage. They reported what they had heard to Baron von Taube, who was roused to equal indignation.

The Baron was not really a bad man—he had his good qualities and his genial moods. But he was fussy, and explosive; and all the pride of Prussia was incarnate in him. So, acting on his impulse, he ordered the firebell to be rung as the signal for a parade; and the prisoners formed up, four deep, in front of their respective barracks, to hear what he had to say. And he had a great deal to say; and the scene which ensued is one of those which have burnt themselves into the memory of all Ruhleben prisoners.

His bosom, always addicted to swelling with patriotic

pride, was now swollen almost to bursting point; and he bore down upon the assembled prisoners in one of his towering rages. His face was rubicund; his eyes glared; his chest was well expanded, and he thumped it hard, in order to emphasise his eloquence. The spectacle suggested a pouter pigeon trying to look like a stormy petrel; and the hot words flowed from the Baron's thick lips like molten lava. He passed from barrack to barrack, repeating his speech in front of each, until breath failed him; and this was the text of his discourse :—

'It stands to reason that, in a camp like this, there must be both Englishmen and Germans. The English, being in the majority here, have attempted to oppress the Germans. It has even come to this, that certain Englishmen have permitted themselves to speak of the Germans as *die blutiger Deutschen*. On their behalf, I throw that insult back in your teeth. It is you who are *die blutiger Engländer*. It was you who began this war; but it is we Germans, thank God ! who are the victors—at all events up till now; and there is every reason to hope that we shall remain the victors. Now, therefore, I call upon those of you who are good friends of Germany (*gut Deutschgesinnt*) to step forward.'

They stepped forward; in some barracks by ones and twos, in other barracks in much larger numbers. Not only men with German names and German accents stepped forward; together with them there went a certain very small number of others

—men, as a rule, with German wives and German businesses. Some men who were about to step forward are said to have been held back by the coat-tails by their friends; others stepped forward by mistake, but withdrew when it was explained to them what their action was taken to imply. A number of them, however —about 300 or 400 in all—were paraded elsewhere and harangued; the gist of the harangue being that they could always rely upon protection if molested.

It was the worst error of tact that Baron von Taube ever committed. The accentuation of differences of opinion previously slurred over was now inevitable, and the feeling gained ground that the men to whom the Baron had made these advances were not to be trusted. Many of them were instantly cut dead by men with whom they had previously lived on terms of mutual toleration; and nicknames began to be bandied. *Deutschgesinnt* suggested *Deutsch Gesindel* to those who knew German; while those who neither knew German nor wished to know it altered it into *Deutsch Gestink.*

Disciplinary punishment was then expected; but that, as it happened, was averted, and peace was made, by the representations of Professor F. Sefton Delmer —Professor of English at the University of Berlin— and some other distinguished linguists and philologists, who waited upon the Baron and lectured him on the idioms of the English language.

It was all, of course, about 'the word.' The question was: What did the word really mean? No doubt the

Baron's dictionary gave '*blutiger*'; but that was wrong The real English equivalent of '*blutiger*' was 'bloodthirsty'; and the word used by the sailors did not even faintly suggest either bloodthirstiness or bloodguiltiness. That word really had very little meaning—especially when used by sailors. It had lately become fashionable in polite circles in England in consequence of its appearance in the works of a distinguished man of letters, highly regarded in Germany—Mr George Bernard Shaw; and in nautical circles it was just one of those fixed epithets which men of limited vocabularies applied to anything and anybody; the epithet which, defined by the great Dr Johnson as 'a term of endearment among sailors,' [1] was currently employed by them to create, as it were, an atmosphere of *gemüthlichkeit* in the fo'c'sle.

What was the Baron to say to that? He was not a scholar—he was not even a professional soldier. He was simply an insurance agent smoking long cigars in a uniform; and here was all the philological learning of all the Universities—German as well as English—being poured into him by really eminent professors. Being a German, he doubtless had, *au fond*, a genuine respect for professors, for erudition, and for accuracy; so he listened and allowed himself to be convinced that perhaps, after all, there had been a misunderstanding. The only point on which he insisted was that, as certain barracks had been discovered to contain a large number

[1] It was really, of course, quite another word which Dr Johnson thus defined; but the Baron did not know that.

of pro-Germans, those barracks must elect pro-German captains nominated by himself.

That was duly done. Barrack V. had three pro-German captains in quick succession: Mr Hasslacker, Mr Overweg, and Mr Klingender; and the Baron, having saved his face by appointing them, would probably have preferred to hear no more of his unfortunate mistake; but presently Berlin, having heard what had happened, sent down a peremptory order. So the fire-bell ran again, and there was another parade for the purpose of separating the pro-German sheep from the *Stock-Engländer* goats.

This time, however, the Baron's manner was as different from his previous manner as chalk from cheese. He no longer foamed and boiled; he no longer thumped his fine protuberant chest. He seemed to be thoroughly ashamed of himself, compelled to discharge an unpleasant duty, and anxious to get it over as quickly as possible. His tone was subdued; his speech was rapid; his very phrases were apologetic. Those whom he called upon to separate themselves from the others were not now described as *gut Deutschgesinnt*, but as *die sogenannter Deutschgesinnt*—'the so-called pro-Germans.' Evidently his experiences had given him an eye for humbug.

Fewer men now responded to the call. Some were deterred because the invitation so obviously lacked cordiality; others because they had profited by the interval given for reflection. Still, a good many did step out—mostly men who were really, to all intents and

purposes, Germans, but also a few men who trembled for their German property, or imagined that, if they professed to love their enemies, their enemies would suffer them to depart in peace—and it was no longer a question merely of entering their names on a list. The line of demarcation was now to be material as well as moral; the pro-Germans were to be kept from contamination by being herded in separate barracks at the farther end of the camp. The Tea House, a part of Barrack I, and certain wooden barracks in its vicinity were set apart for them; while the English quartered in these barracks were to be transferred to the places in the other barracks which they vacated.

A game of General Post ensued. For the whole of an afternoon, men were to be seen rushing to and fro, laden with luggage, seeking a fresh place in which to lay their heads. The shuffle, on the whole, made for what the Germans call *Burgfriede*; and intense satisfaction was felt on the English side of the camp when Baron von Taube was reported to have expressed the opinion that the pro-Germans in the Tea House would 'declare themselves pro-French or pro-Chinese to-morrow if they thought they had anything to gain by doing so.' On the German side, however, there were searchings of heart. What, precisely, did the authorities understand the avowal of pro-Germanism to mean? Two of the pro-German captains raised that question, and asked for a ruling. Was it true, as a non-commissioned officer had said, that pro-Germans would be expected to join the German army and fight against

England? Or was the division of the camp, as Baron von Taube suggested, a purely domestic matter designed for the protection of those prisoners whose feelings were wounded when they heard Germany calumniated?

Count Schwerin cleared the air by instructing the captains of all the barracks to give out a notice on the subject. The division, he said, appeared to have caused 'unrest' among the interned; and that unrest appeared to have been augmented by the erroneous impression that the segregation would be taken as a basis for the granting of the requests of the prisoners for release or leave of absence. That was not the case. Petitions for release would be considered only in the cases of :—

1. Any prisoner who had a son serving or willing to serve in the German Army.

2. Any prisoner suffering from a malady unlikely to be cured within a reasonable time.

Petitions for leave of absence would be granted only in the cases of :—

1. Any prisoner whose parents, wife, or children were certified by the district medical officer to be dangerously ill.

2. Any prisoner who desired to attend the confirmation of his child or the funeral of a near relative.

3. Any prisoner reporting himself as a volunteer for the German army, with the sanction of the regiment which he desired to enter.

4. Any prisoner wishing to arrange a business settlement in the interest of German creditors.

5. Any prisoner whose co-operation was necessary to the execution of contracts entered into for the delivery of goods to the German authorities, or to the assurance of the livelihood of persons employed in such undertakings.

As for the meaning of *Deutschgesinnt,* the following authoritative definitions were given out :—

'*Deutschgesinnt* is he who has undertaken to go completely over to the Germans, will educate his children to be Germans, and allow them to enter the German army —one, in short, who has decided to give up all association with England. *Deutschfreundlich,* on the contrary, is he who wishes to retain his respect and attachment to German ideas, in spite of the war, but without wishing to abandon his position as a British citizen.'

There was only one fault to be found with those definitions : they ought to have been given out before the separation instead of afterwards. A good many of the *Deutschfreundlich* certainly had no desire to be tarred with the *Deutschgesinnt* brush, and no expectation that their profession that they had no particular objection to Germans as such would result in their removal to special pro-German quarters. Having German wives, German friends, and German businesses, and expecting to continue to carry on business in Germany after the war was over, they had failed to realise the intensity of the emotion which the war was

evoking. There were those among them who, recognising their error of judgment, soon sought permission to revert to their old allegiance and return to their old friends. There were others who missed no opportunity of asserting that they had no real friendship for the Germans but had been influenced in their action solely by considerations of material interest. A British subject, for instance, who knew no English but generally spoke French, was heard to say :—

'Je vous supplie, monsieur, de me croire, quand je vous dis que je ne suis pas là par sentiment—je suis là par intérêt.'

In any case the cat was now out of the bag. The German authorities had ordered the segregation of the pro-Germans for the purpose of using Ruhleben, as far as possible, as a recruiting depot; and they did so use it with some success, though perhaps with less success than they anticipated.

There were men of pure German descent who resisted their solicitations; some of them because they were timorous; others because they resented the way in which they had been treated. A fairly typical case was that of a German of over fifty who had lived in South Africa, fought there against the Boers, and risen to the rank of sergeant in Kitchener's Scouts.

'I'm a German,' he said, 'and I don't pretend to be anything but a German. I've never been naturalised, either in South Africa or anywhere else; but they would have it that I must have been naturalised because I'd

lived in South Africa so long, and because I'd fought in your army, so they sent me here. Now that they've turned round and asked me to fight for them, I've told them that I'll see them damned first.'

The straightforwardness of that attitude disarmed hostility; and there were also some among the men who did enlist concerning whom one felt that a German uniform was the proper costume for them. To have grudged them to Germany when one did not want them for England would indeed have been to strike a dog-in-the-manger posture. There remained cases, however, which could not be regarded in that light. It is a subject on which one prefers to say as little as possible; but one defection was so glaring that the camp magazine took notice of it. In a humorous list, compiled after the manner of *Punch*, of imaginary publishers' announcements, it attributed to one of them a work entitled *Under Two Flags*.

Such incidents, as was inevitable, fixed a great gulf between the two ends of the camp. The English did not visit the pro-Germans; and the pro-Germans were not encouraged to visit the English, though some of them, at first, showed an inclination to do so. A few personal acquaintances, however, were kept alive; and through these the average Englishman could follow the fortunes of the pro-Germans without mixing with them. It thus transpired that many of them were in a state of pitiable destitution. Such parcels as came to them from German friends contained less and less as

the blockade became more effective. The philanthropists in England who 'adopted' Ruhleben prisoners did not see their way to adopt any prisoner who gave a pro-German address. Yet the German authorities never compensated them for this disadvantage by increasing their rations. They were in a better position than the other prisoners to gauge the nutritive value of the Ruhleben soup.

It transpired, too, that they were far from being a harmonious community. Some of them claimed that they had been lured to the pro-German end of the camp by false pretences; one of them lost no time in posting a notice in his old barrack to that effect. Their differences came to a head when Mr Klingender, then the Tea House captain, fell ill and was removed to the sanatorium. A new captain had then to be elected, and two candidates presented themselves. One of them ran as *Deutschgesinnt*, and the other as *Deutschfreundlich*; and the *Deutschfreundlich* candidate was returned by a substantial majority.

Even at the Casino restaurant, which was supposed to be neutral ground, the distinction between the English and German parties in the camp was rigorously maintained; the members of the two parties making a point of sitting at separate tables. Only in the playing fields was there any formal association between them. The pro-Germans did produce a cricket team; and the right which they enjoyed to the use of the ground made it difficult to decline their challenges. It was a point of honour, however, not only to beat them, but

to beat them badly; and that result was successfully accomplished even by the weakest barracks, which were those occupied respectively by the Jews and the prisoners of colour. The countenances of the latter veritably shone with pride when they were congratulated on the fullness of their victory.

'Yes, sah. We beat the P.G.'s, sah. Of course we beat 'em, sah. We was out to beat 'em, sah!'

As time passed, however, the population of these pro-German barracks gradually diminished. A good many of the men, as has been stated, joined the German army; and it may be related in passing that one of them once ventured into the camp in uniform, to visit a friend, and was indignantly booed out of it, with the ill-concealed approval of some German soldiers. Others were released into Germany, either because their sons had joined the German army or because they had undertaken to do work recognised as of national importance. More and more of them were accorded that privilege as the man-power problem became acute in Germany; and the few who remained ceased to count in the life of the camp.

Even to the last, however, the German military authorities, from time to time, for some inscrutable reason, decided that one of their own soldiers was an Englishman, took him out of his uniform, and sent him to Ruhleben as a civil prisoner. Mr Powell, whose position brought him into official relation with such incidents, contributes a special note on that branch of the subject :—

'I well remember being called to the German military office and seeing a little man standing there in German uniform. The officer informed me that he was an Englishman, and asked me to provide him with clothes. I demurred at first, knowing that he could not possibly be a British soldier caught in German uniform, and must have been living in Germany and have joined the German army without knowing his nationality. Later, I was told that the man had, in fact, been perfectly aware of his nationality when he joined the army, but had refrained from calling attention to it until his knees were weakened by the intimation that his regiment was to proceed to the front.

'One or two other men were brought into the camp and transferred from German uniforms to British clothes in the course of the years 1915 and 1916; but the most amazing case that ever came under my notice was that of two brothers who had no idea that they had ever had anything to do with England, did not remember ever having seen England, could not speak English, and, at the outbreak of war, had been called up, like all the other Germans of their age, fully believing that they were of German birth and nationality. They had, as they themselves told me, fought against the British, the French, and the Russians, in the front line trenches; yet suddenly, towards the end of 1917, after three years of what they conceived to be patriotic service, they were, for some reason which I never succeeded in ascertaining, taken out of their uniforms and sent to Ruhleben, and condemned to endure, for the greater

part of twelve months, the humiliation of being interned in what they firmly believed to be their own country.'

Truly the Germans were a queer people, with queer ideas as to the best way of giving a fillip to pro-Germanism in their internment camps!

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSONNEL OF THE MILITARY ADMINISTRATION—COUNT SCHWERIN—LIEUTENANT GLIECH—COUNT SCHWERIN'S SON—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL VON REICHENBACH—BARON VON TAUBE—BARON VON MUTZENBECHER—THE PRINCE OF THURN AND TAXIS—RITTMEISTER VON BROCKEN—RÜDIGER—BENTHIN

THE segregation of the pro-Germans was a historic incident which served to clear the air. They never were helpful in organisation; they never would have been helpful; and they knew it. One of the most intelligent of them—a Doctor of Chemistry, *Deutschfreundlich* rather than *Deutschgesinnt*, though he spoke English with a distinct German accent—admitted as much in conversation with one of the authors in the days before the split.

'I notice here,' he said, 'a great difference between the men who have been brought up in Germany and the men who have been brought up in England. We who have had a German education seem to have lost our bearings; we wander about the camp like stray dogs, not knowing what to do. You who have had an English education set to work at once as if you were emigrants colonising a new country.'

It was a true distinction; and it carries the more weight for coming from the German side. British organisers, as we have already seen, got to work as

soon as they were brought to the camp; and we shall see presently how the captains' committee—which must at first have seemed to the Germans a body of no significance—grew, like the cloud which was at first no bigger than a man's hand, until it eventually came to exercise functions comparable to those of a Board of Directors, if not of a Cabinet Council. And the growth was more rapid, and suffered less interruption, after the position of the pro-Germans had been regularised.

Pro-German captains, of course, had been placed on the captains' committee; but if Baron von Taube placed them on that body in the expectation that they would dominate it, he was doomed to disappointment. Their presence, no doubt, was an embarrassment. It was strongly suspected—though justice requires that Mr Klingender of the Tea House should be specifically exempted from that suspicion—that some of them betrayed confidences and carried tales; but even that difficulty was surmounted. As generally happens when Cabinets are large, an informal and unofficial Inner Cabinet took charge of the situation, deciding policy, and drafting agenda; and on that unofficial body pro-Germanism was not represented.

To the success of the policy followed two conditions were, of course, requisite; the acquiescence of the camp authorities, and the cordial backing, based on faith in our capacity, of the American Embassy. It took time to establish those conditions; but they were established; and it will therefore be as well now to introduce a few

frank and impartial notes concerning the camp personnel.

Count Schwerin, the commandant, was a wealthy landed proprietor from Mecklenburg-Strelitz. He was a very handsome old gentleman, more than seventy years of age, of dignified manners and amiable character. No past experience qualified him for his post, and he had no special competence for it. He knew less than nothing about camp management and organisation. But he had one fixed idea which, in the end, earned him golden opinions: that his function was not to bully prisoners, but to protect them. It was known to a few of us that he had written a letter, not meant for our eyes, in which he spoke of his prisoners as his 'children'; and that fact was remembered to his credit even when, as sometimes happened, he suffered a vicious subordinate to lead him by the nose. On more than one occasion he defended his children against the tyranny of Berlin.

Notably he did so when, in the early days, the order came from Berlin that there must be no more smoking in the camp. The Count then, after taking counsel with Baron von Taube, rang up the War Office and spoke as follows:—

'Smoking,' he said, 'is the one little bit of *gemüthlichkeit* permitted to the prisoners in this camp. If the privilege is withdrawn, then I shall withdraw from the office of commandant. Baron von Taube, who is now with me, associates himself with this protest,

and will also offer his resignation if it is ineffective.'

Nor was that all. The Count also warned the captains that, even if the order were cancelled, the War Office might achieve its end by cutting off the supplies of tobacco, and he counselled them to lose no time in stocking the canteen with as much tobacco as they could get in. Naturally that made him popular. He was loudly cheered on his next public appearance; and a later incident showed how completely he had made good his place in the hearts of those under his authority.

It happened on one of his birthdays. How the date of the anniversary came to be known in the camp it is difficult to say; but it did come to be known, and it was decided by the musicians in the camp to give him a complimentary serenade. He came out to thank the serenaders, with tears coursing down his cheeks, and addressed them in a voice broken with emotion, expressing his heartfelt regret that the circumstances of the time prevented him from acknowledging the attention as he should have liked. It will readily be believed that his retirement, due to broken health, and his subsequent death as the sequel of a throat operation, were genuinely regretted in the camp.

Unfortunately Count Schwerin had, for some time, as his adjutant a certain Lieutenant Gliech, who can only be described as a typical Prussian bully. When he first came to the camp, this man was only a minor Government official, without any military rank; but

he contrived to push his way to the front by truculence and intrigue until he reached this post. One story will suffice to illustrate his manners and tone. A young man, recently married, came to Lieutenant Gliech, telling him that he had just heard that his wife was practically starving in Berlin, and asking for leave of absence, in order that he might see what arrangement he could make for her support. Lieutenant Gliech not only refused his request, but added the gratuitously brutal remark that 'there was no need for any young and pretty woman to starve in Berlin.'

Later, young Count Schwerin, the commandant's son, took Gliech's place; and the change was for the better. The young Count had not, indeed, his father's dignity. His prestige suffered somewhat in the camp from his addiction to violent language. Still, he was helpful in establishing good relations between the prisoners and his father's successor, Lieutenant-Colonel von Reichenbach, who retained him as his adjutant: a fact which gives colour to the report that his father had implored him, on his deathbed, to do his best for the interned. His relations with them at the last were of the friendliest. Deprived of the insignia of his rank by the Soldiers' Council, he sought sympathy in the captains' office, saying :—

'I thank God, Mr Powell, that my father didn't live to see this day. He, I feel sure, would never have taken off his epaulettes—he would sooner have blown his brains out.'

To Lieutenant-Colonel von Reichenbach, Mr Powell,

who alone of the two collaborators knew him, writes this testimonial :—

'He told me, on his arrival, that he had heard from both the Berlin Commandantur and the War Office of the efficiency of the civil administration of the camp, and that he would be glad if I would tell both the captains' committee and the camp that he wished everything to continue as before. He added that if I, at any time, as representative of the interned, wished to make any complaint or prefer any request, he would always be willing to hear our views; and he acted up to the spirit of this undertaking until the day on which the Soldiers' Council deposed him. His one desire seemed to be that the camp should be quiet and orderly; and I think it can be said with truth that the English prisoners gave him far less trouble than the German soldiers, and were punished far less frequently.'

A partial character sketch of Baron von Taube, the camp officer, has already been given. His main fault was his habit of listening to tittle tattle, accepting it as gospel truth, and losing his temper over it; but he was not *au fond* either unamiable or unteachable. The British character was a perpetual source of surprise to him. It amazed him to hear two football teams cheer each other, after their match was over, on the playing fields. It amazed him still more to hear British sailors cheering, as a sportsman, a German non-commissioned officer who had asked to be relieved of his safe and

easy job in the camp and sent to take his chances at the front.[1] Perhaps it amazed him most of all to hear cheers for himself in response to some genial words spoken at one of the camp entertainments.

Indeed, it would not be too much to say that, for Baron von Taube, a British cheer was a liberal education. He liked to hear himself cheered; he liked to hear Baroness von Taube cheered; and there came a time when he laid himself out to earn those cheers by according passes to the Casino restaurant to any one who asked for them, never failing to include a permit (seldom granted by the doctor) to drink beer. So his manners—at first those of a violent tradesman blowing up a clerk—steadily improved; and Mr Powell is able to add this note on his official relations with him :—

'One day, when he was in one of his better moods, I ventured to suggest to him that, as Englishmen were easy to lead but difficult to drive, he served no useful purpose by storming at us like the Man of Wrath in *Elizabeth and her German Garden*, and that it would be better for him, as well as us, if, when he heard reports disturbing to his composure, he would consult the captains before delivering himself publicly on the subject. He evidently took that advice to heart. On many subsequent occasions I saw him stalking across the camp towards

[1] Lieutenant Gliech was present on that occasion, and asked me what the cheering meant. I told him, and he said he would sooner have seen the men spitting in the non-commissioned officer's face. Baron von Taube, to whom I complained of this remark, asked me not to be perturbed by it, adding the sarcastic comment, suggested by Gliech's recent promotion from non-commissioned rank: '*Unteroffizier bleibt unteroffizier.*'—J. P.

our office, with thunder on his brow; but I could also see, from the expression on his face, and his resolute chewing of his moustache, the strenuous efforts which he was making to suppress his rage and clothe his angry thoughts in calm and decorous language, in order that he might lay them before us in the composed manner of a Superior Person.

'It was very touching; and after we had reformed the Baron we came to like him. In the days of scarcity, he is said sometimes to have been given a slice of cake, a tin of condensed milk, or a pot of jam as a reward for good behaviour; and when he was sent off to Belgium on his way to the front (which he was so fortunate as not to reach before the declaration of the armistice) his disappearance was on the whole regretted.'

Baron von Mutzenbecher, the censor of our correspondence was always popular. Possibly his popularity was the cause of his removal from his post before the end of the war. It might be argued that his was a cheap popularity because, in the position which he occupied, it was easy to grant favours and seldom necessary to refuse them; but it was, at any rate, universally agreed that he was both a gentleman and a sportsman. He sometimes wrote letters to the mothers of the prisoners, assuring them that their sons were in good health. He openly admired the audacity with which the English newspapers were smuggled into the camp under his nose, saying that he would be glad of the help of a Sherlock Holmes to show him how it was done; and he always took a sympathetic interest in the camp sports.

One of his remarks, at the close of a hotly-contested football match, endeared him to all who heard it.

'When I see how you play football,' he said, 'I quite understand how it was that we failed to beat the " contemptible little army." '

Under Baron von Mutzenbecher, as assistant censor, worked a Prince of Thurn and Taxis. He had been at school in England, and he laid himself out to be agreeable. Exchanged prisoners sometimes received useful hints from him as to the rigour with which their baggage was likely to be ransacked on the frontier; and he openly endorsed Count Schwerin's view that prisoners had an inalienable right to smoke. It had been rumoured that no more tobacco was to be sold in the camp because all the tobacco in the country was wanted for the army; and he said what he thought on the subject.

'The army be damned,' was his idiomatic contribution to the debate.

Rittmeister von Brocken, who acted for about a year as assistant commandant, was perhaps, of all the officers, the most straightforward. 'I well remember,' says Mr Powell, 'the occasion on which I first really came to know him. The matter at issue was some favour which he had refused; and I thought I might be able to induce him to reconsider his refusal. He informed me, very quietly, that when he said " no," he meant " no," and that proposals must only be laid before him on that assumption. It was not, perhaps, an ingratiating or conciliatory speech; but it had a satisfactory corollary. Not only did Rittmeister von Brocken mean "no" when he

said " no," he also meant " yes " when he said " yes." Consequently one knew where one stood with him—a promise was a promise and would be kept; and it is not often that one can say that of one's dealings with a Prussian officer.'

Feldwebel Lieutenant Rüdiger, who played an important part in connection with releases and exchanges, was a suavely offensive person, and the incarnation of what the Germans call *Schadenfreude*—or delight in the misfortunes of others. It seemed to amuse him to lure men on to expect that they would be exchanged in order that he might enjoy the spectacle of their disappointment when the decision was given against them. He was probably, for that reason, the best-hated officer in the camp, though he never raved or stormed; but he was not important enough to merit more than this passing notice.

Sub-lieutenant Benthin, who did sometimes rave and storm, was much better liked. He was sometimes called 'Benzine' or 'Fireworks,' because he flared up so easily; sometimes 'Windmill,' because of his habit of whirling his arms about in agitated argument. His gesticulations, it seemed, were a *sine qua non* of his eloquence; for when an accident compelled him to wear one arm in a sling and occupy the other by carrying a stick, he was like a man suddenly struck dumb. He recovered, however, and exhibited all his accustomed eloquence when entangled in a financial argument with Mr Platford, the camp treasurer.

An order had come from Berlin stating that the civil

administration was liable for certain wages previously paid by the German authorities, and that a sum of about 2000 marks must be refunded.

'We have paid the money over to the American Embassy. You had better apply there for it,' said Mr Platford.

'But we're at war with the Americans. We can't apply to them,' bellowed Benthin. 'What on earth are we to do about it?'

'Well, if you ask me to advise you,' said Mr Platford, 'I should suggest that you had better wait until the war is over.'

And then Benthin's arms flew round and round like those of a windmill in a hurricane.

The only other camp officers of whom it will be necessary to speak in detail are the doctors; and their case must be dealt with in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER V

FINANCIAL QUESTIONS—DESTITUTE PRISONERS—THE NECESSITY OF RELIEF MONEY—NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE AMERICAN EMBASSY ON THAT SUBJECT—MR POWELL'S SUMMARY OF THE FINANCIAL HISTORY OF THE CAMP

In the end—and, indeed, long before the end—the relations between the elected representatives of the prisoners in the camp and the neutral diplomatic representatives of British interests in the enemy capital were extremely cordial and confidential. It has already been suggested, however, that the building up of those relations took time; and it was inevitable that it should do so, for various reasons.

Civil prisoners were a novel product of war conditions; their status was undefined by any prescription of international law, and was only gradually defined by international agreement as the war proceeded. The American Embassy, in undertaking the protection of their rights and interests, was assuming a task of which it had no experience, in circumstances for which there were no precedents. Above all, when approached by the captains' committee, it found itself engaged in relations with a body for which there was no precedent—a body also of uncertain, though obviously limited, authority. It was necessary for the Embassy to feel its way as well as for the captains to feel theirs; and precedents, on

both sides, had to be made instead of being followed, under the critical eyes of two mutually hostile Governments. That that was done successfully was due not merely to the tact of individuals but also to the adaptability of the two races concerned—their readiness to postpone abstract problems to the concrete question: What is the next thing which it will be useful for us to do? The constitution of Ruhleben, like the British Constitution itself, was built up by the steady pursuance of that train of thought.

The reasons which delayed for four months the Ambassador's first personal visit to the camp are unknown to the writers. He certainly had many other cares on his mind, and it may be that the German military authorities made difficulties, being ashamed of Ruhleben and afraid of an impartial report. Eventually Mr Morgan's representations, and the grim stories told of the starvation of the prisoners, brought him out there; but he had been in relation with the captains' committee from the first in connection with questions of finance; and as those were questions with the settlement of which Mr Powell was personally concerned, it will be best that Mr Powell should here take up the narrative and speak in the first person.

'Financial questions' (Mr Powell writes) 'were first mooted at a captains' meeting held on November 10, 1914. It was then decided to make a collection in all the barracks, and devote the sum raised to the improvement of the sanitary arrangements. The amount

originally subscribed was 323 marks (£16 3s. od.); and it enabled the captains to buy a supply of disinfectants —things for which the German military authorities were unwilling to pay—and engage a gang of men at a fixed wage to clean the latrines and disinfect them twice daily. The fund was administered by Mr John Philip Jones, an accountant of the gramophone company of Hayes, Middlesex. For some days he had to carry all the money in his pockets, and keep his accounts in a small note-book; but by November 15 he had provided himself with proper books and a cash box.

'Meanwhile it had been seen to be urgently necessary to get money into the camp for the relief of the more indigent prisoners—many of them absolutely destitute; and on November 18 Mr Trinks was able to call at the Embassy to discuss the matter. His report to the committee on his return runs thus :—

> "In the first place, the Embassy were not at all inclined to make the advance of 2000 marks required for relief, but they were eventually persuaded that the money was absolutely necessary, and that it would be used sparingly and for the purposes for which it was intended."

'This advance was followed by a letter requesting that any balance which remained over after the necessitous cases had been relieved should be refunded. There was no such balance. On the contrary, on

December 8, the Embassy provided a second sum of 2000 marks; and Mr Jackson, who was at the head of the British Department of the American Embassy informed Mr Trinks that a large consignment of clogs,[1] underclothing, etc., was being forwarded to the camp, and that the captains might draw on the Embassy for anything in reason. The situation was further eased in December by the discovery that we had a claim on the King Edward VII. Fund, established shortly before the war by Sir Ernest Cassell for the relief of indigent British subjects in Germany. About 10,000 marks was received from that and distributed—the recipients who benefited by the distribution numbering about 1750.

'These measures, however, were only provisional and palliative. It was obviously desirable to establish a permanent Relief Fund on which we could draw permanently to the extent of our urgent requirements. I raised that point as soon as I succeeded Mr Trinks as captain of the camp, and was privileged to visit the Embassy; and I have a lively recollection of that day's negotiations.

'I was received by two junior members of the Embassy staff and told them that at least 2000 men ought to receive five marks each per week. They referred to the Ambassador, who sent them back with the reply that he could not immediately sanction the payment. I told them that the whole camp knew that I was asking for

[1] Most necessary articles in the early conditions of the camp. Men who did not wear them never had dry feet.

this assistance, and that the necessity was extremely urgent. They referred the matter again to the Ambassador, who still did not see his way to consent.

I still pressed the point, however, like the importunate widow, saying that I should return, after lunch, in the hope that His Exellency would, in the meantime, have reconsidered the matter."

'What discussion took place during my absence I cannot say; but when I did return to the Embassy, the cheque was there. I then proposed that the Embassy should cable to the British Government, seeking sanction for the continuation of the payment on the understanding that the men receiving the relief should sign an undertaking to repay the advances when financially able to do so—the idea of charity being thus eliminated. On April 9, 1915, I was able to report that the British Government had acceded to the suggestion. Two further questions had then to be raised:—

'1. Would it be legitimate to pay the relief money to any man who chose to apply for it?

'2. Would it not be proper to exclude from the list of beneficiaries those prisoners who had volunteered for service in the German army?

'In reply to the first question I was told, on May 8, that the British Government had expressly stated that the relief was intended for destitute men only, but that they felt that the line need not be drawn too rigidly in doubtful cases. In reply to the second question they ruled that no distinction ought to be made as long

as the men remained in the camp. The decision disappointed us; but we had to accept it. The continuation of the payments was the subject of much criticism in the camp at the time; and it was then impossible for the captains to meet criticism by giving frank explanation. I give that explanation now. The payments were made, not because the British captains wished to make them, but because the American Embassy, in view perhaps of the difficulty of proving disputed cases, ruled that this should be done.[1]

'These preliminary points made clear, I will endeavour to summarise the financial history of the camp, devoting separate consideration to :—

'1. The Relief Fund.

'2. The Canteens Capital Account.

'3. The Camp Expenses Account.

'The Relief Fund was administered by a sub-committee of the Finance Committee, of which the original members were :—Mr S. H. Urry, Manager of the British Bank of South Africa; Mr Cottrell, a Hamburg merchant; and Mr J. Weston, who had been arrested as a spy while working for the British Relief Fund in Berlin, and kept for several months in solitary confinement. Lists of men in need of relief were made out each week by the captains of the several barracks. These lists were examined and passed on to the camp treasurer, who handed the captains, every Saturday

[1] It was never officially made known that Ruhleben prisoners were being recruited for service in the German army, though there was ample unofficial information on the subject, and the fact was notorious.

morning, the amounts which they respectively required. The men who received the money had to sign receipts for it, together with vouchers undertaking to refund the amount to the British Exchequer when financially competent to do so. The lists in duplicate and the vouchers in triplicate were forwarded each week by the camp treasurer to the American Embassy (and subsequently to the Dutch Legation), together with a weekly statement showing the amount of cash in hand, cash received, any repayments made by former recipients, and the distribution made to each barrack. The approximate amount required was drawn each week by the captain of the camp at the Embassy.

'A time came when, in consequence of the quantity of stores sent into the camp from England, a number of men voluntarily reduced their drawings to three marks or less per week. It was then suggested by the Finance Committee that the relief allowance should be reduced to three marks per week. The suggestion was approved by both the captains' committee and the American Ambassador; but the feeling against the reduction was very strong in some quarters in the camp. Eventually it was agreed that four marks weekly should be paid; and that sum remained the maximum until the evacuation of the camp.

'A subsequent chapter will relate the circumstances in which the catering and other trading in the camp came to be taken over by the interned. Here it will suffice to say that the profits derived from that trading

were the chief source from which it was possible to supplement the funds raised in the camp.

'At first we were under the impression that we should have to be self-supporting, and to pay all camp expenses from funds raised in the camp. Prices were fixed accordingly, and by the end of June, 1915, we had in hand a surplus of about 30,000 marks. The American Ambassador then, after going through our quarterly statement, said that we need make no provision for camp expenses, which he would pay, and that we had better get rid of our surplus by selling food-stuffs below cost. We did so, and when our surplus was practically expended, we approached the Embassy with a demand for several thousand marks due for camp expenses. To our great surprise, Mr Gerard stated that he could not pay this claim without first laying the matter before the British Government; and he stuck to his position even when reminded of the previous arrangement. The British Government did, in the end, consent to the payment for the upkeep of the camp; but it was judged advisable to raise the prices while awaiting that consent, and to set aside, after it had been received, a special reserve fund of 25,000 marks, as a safeguard against any future emergency of the kind.

'That was done. After that date, we had regular quarterly settlements with the Embassy; and our accounts were audited both at the Embassy and in the camp—the camp auditor being Mr McNaught, a chartered accountant of the firm of Joscelyne, Miles, and Co., London. The cash was duly counted at

regular intervals; and after the publication of a financial statement, the books were, for three days, open to the inspection of any of the interned who cared to look at them. During the whole time they were on view, only one gentleman took the trouble to do so, though there were many men in the camp—merchants, accountants, and bankers—capable of detecting any defect or irregularity.

'The money needed for the camp maintenance expenditure was drawn for the first year or two from the American Embassy. Later, when the Central Prisoners of War Committee sent us consignments of goods—cigarettes, tobacco, clothing, disinfectants, and, later, printing, bookbinding, and handicraft supplies—we not only were able to keep the camp going from the returns on sales of these goods, but had a balance in hand which we paid over to the Legation at the end of each quarter. Yet the cost was heavy, for the expenses which we had to meet included :—

'1. Wages of stewards employed in the lazarett and the convalescent barrack.

'2. Purchase of fresh vegetables for these institutions.

'3. Purchase of cleaning materials.

'4. Rent of playing fields.

'5. Expenses of funerals.

'6. Payments for the meals of invalids sent by the doctor to the Casino restaurant to be fed up.

'7. Replacing brooms, shovels, rakes, and other tools and utensils.

'8. Wages of fatigue parties.

'That is practically all that it is necessary to state in order to make the financial position clear; but the subject must not be left without reference to certain German exactions and irregularities. The military authorities exacted a commission of 7½ per cent. on all purchases for the canteens, and took profits on wine sold in the camp. This money, according to a German War Office Order of which we got knowledge at a later date, should have been expended for the benefit of indigent prisoners. That commission amounted, in the course of four years, to something over £15,000;[1] and it was not devoted to the benefit of indigent prisoners. The only payment which might be so classed was that devoted to the provision of steam heating in the Y.M.C.A. hut built with the American Y.M.C.A. Fund. A sum of 5000 marks was paid out of the commission by the camp military authorities to their superiors on account of shortage of military stock in the camp; and other sums were taken from it to pay a detective employed to shadow prisoners permitted to visit the American Embassy.

[1] This was not the only profit made out of the prisoners. The kitchen expenditure sanctioned by the German War Office was 66 pfennigs per head per day; the actual expenditure was, on an average, 44 pfennigs per head per day. The sum thus economised in the course of four years was about £50,000. The profit on the sale of wine, sanctioned by the German War Office, was about £5000; and the value of the waste paper, string, tins, etc., of our parcels, collected and removed for the benefit of the German Government, on the understanding that the proceeds should be applied to our benefit, was also about £5000. The total roughly corresponds to the £75,000 advanced as relief money by the British Government; and it is to be hoped that it will be recovered before the accounts with Germany are closed.

'The German officer in charge of these financial details was Captain von Amelunxen, in private life, I believe, the agent of a firm of champagne merchants. His reputation with the soldiers was no better than his reputation with the prisoners. He was absent on leave at the time of the revolution; and one of the first acts of the Soldiers' Council was to send him a telegram to the effect that if he did not return and report himself within twenty-four hours, he would be put under arrest. The Soldiers' Council also asked me to furnish any evidence I could against the man, though I refused to do so, preferring not to mix myself up in the business; and the last that I heard was that his property had been confiscated as security for the refunding of money which he was alleged to have embezzled, and that he himself had taken to flight in order to avoid being thrown into the latrine.

'It is a queer story of fraud superimposed upon stinginess; but whereas we unquestionably suffered through the fraud, the stinginess, so irritating at first, proved, in the long run, a source of advantage. The refusal of the German authorities to sanction the expenditure of German money on the improvement of our conditions, or even on the elementary essentials of well-being, paid for, as a matter of course, by the British Government in the British internment camps, compelled us to undertake financial responsibilities which we might otherwise never have dreamed of. On the other hand, our readiness to undertake them and our ability to shoulder them inspired a respect which our enemies had never intended to feel.

'Let me recall an incident which brought that sentiment into relief. It was a little matter of a barrack window broken by some missile. Benthin was seen running about in a state of great agitation, demanding who was going to pay for the damage. One would have imagined from his manner that the expense was the last straw destined to break the crippled back of the German Imperial Treasury. I implored him not to be excited, as the camp treasury recognised the obligation and was prepared to meet it. In the twinkling of an eye his manner changed. He calmed down, as if he had been asked to take a seat in the waiting-room of the Deutsche Bank or the Allgemeine Electrizitäts Gesellschaft.

'The incident was typical of the whole trend of things; and our position was, indeed, analogous in many ways with that of the Deutsche Bank. Not only were we advancing money on the conditions approved by the American Embassy and the British Government. We were also financing multifarious industries: cobbling, tailoring, hairdressing, cooking, printing, watch-making, and the charging of electric accumulators.

'Our total turnover was more than £200,000. Our first camp treasurer was Mr J. P. Jones, the other members of the Finance Committee being Mr Urry and Mr J. H. Platford, a partner in the firm of Cooper and Cooper, chartered accountants, London. The highest praise and the greatest gratitude is due to all three of them. In July, 1916, Mr Jones left the camp to work at the American Embassy in Berlin, and his place as treasurer was then taken by Mr Platford, who, on his

release to Holland, was succeeded by Mr Charles Margerison. An idea of the immense volume of complicated business controlled by these gentlemen while prisoners of war may be gathered from the fact that, when the other prisoners returned to England, Mr Jones, at the request of Ridder van Rappart, remained several further months at the Dutch Legation, winding up the financial affairs of the camp, so that everything might be left in perfect order.'

CHAPTER VI

MR WALLACE ELLISON'S SCHEME FOR THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION OF THE CAMP—DECISION OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO WITHDRAW SOLDIERS FROM THE BARRACKS—RUHLEBEN THENCEFORWARD A BIT OF ENGLAND—THE MARBLE ARCH —BOND STREET—WHITECHAPEL—TRAFALGAR SQUARE—A SERIES OF TRAFALGAR SQUARE MEETINGS

THE last chapter inevitably contained some anticipations. The overlapping details of the building of the city of Ruhleben cannot possibly be related in strict chronological order; but, on the scriptural principle that he who would build a city should first sit down and count the cost, it seemed best to begin with an exposition of the financial aspects of the enterprise.

That enterprise, as has already been shown, may fairly be said to have begun in the memorable month of November, 1914. It reached an important stage when, after the first visit of the American Ambassador to the camp in March, 1915, the process of reform received official encouragement. Two days after his visit, a scheme for the reorganisation of the civil administration of the camp was drawn up by Mr Wallace Ellison, the captain of the coloured men's barrack, who subsequently got into trouble with the military authorities, was imprisoned in the Stadt Vogtei, broke out of prison, was hidden by sympathetic Spartacists, escaped to England, and published a thrilling account of his

adventures. His plan for the sub-division of the camp into departments—Education Department, Recreation Department, etc.—working under the captains' committee was accepted, though it had to be amplified as the work expanded, as the basis of our constitution. The work of these several departments must be reviewed separately; but an account must first be given of the formal recognition of the autonomy of the camp; and here again it will be best that Mr Powell should tell his own story :—

'For ten months we carried on as the intermediaries between the military and the prisoners. Our aim throughout that period was to get the administration of the barracks out of the hands of the non-commissioned officers and take charge of it ourselves; our main method was to exercise such powers as we had in a manner too complicated for German non-commissioned officers to understand. Captains began by saving them trouble; they proceeded to puzzle them; they ended by leaving them with little to do except to look on and wonder how the work was done. And then came official approval of the process.

'On September 15, 1915, Count Schwerin sent for me. He told me that his 150 German soldiers were more trouble to him than his 4000 prisoners, and that we were most orderly when left most alone. He proposed, therefore, if I would take full responsibility for order in the camp, and would undertake to report daily the number of men in each barrack, to withdraw the soldiers then living in the barracks, and place the civil



Trafalgar Square.



Bond Street.

administration in full control. He added that he was taking this course without the knowledge of either the War Office or the Berlin Commandantur, and against the wishes of several of his subordinates, who would probably place obstacles in our path. What did I think about it?

'I replied that I should like to place the proposal before my colleagues; and I immediately called a special meeting of the captains' committee for the purpose of doing so. It was unanimously agreed that each captain should put the matter to the men in his barrack. They did so; the men approved; and every captain was re-elected except myself. I, at the request of my colleagues, had reserved myself, as they wished to elect me to the position of captain of the camp, and I was succeeded as captain of Barrack X. by Mr Wynn Williams. On the following day, the formal announcement of the change was made by Baron von Taube on parade; and only one man in the camp expressed a preference for military rule.'

From that time onwards the Ruhleben prisoners constituted a really self-governing community; and the change in the manner adopted towards them by German soldiers and non-commissioned officers, already discernible, was further accentuated. 'When I came here,' said Private Adelfang of Barrack V., 'I was told that all the English were pig-dogs. Here I have learnt that most of them are gentlemen of importance.' And there was another incident of even greater significance. Two soldiers in the Guard House fell to arguing about the civil administration.

'Really,' one of them said, 'these English are wonderful. They do not need any one to tell them what to do. They know without being told, and manage their own affairs without giving any trouble to any one.'

The second soldier protested indignantly against this lavish praise of the enemy; the first soldier firmly maintained his point of view, and punched the second soldier's head.

Thenceforward Ruhleben was really a bit of England —a small British colony as it were, planted in the heart of the enemy's country. An attempt was made there, indeed, just as in the military camps, to undermine the loyalty of Irish prisoners. A parade was held at which the names of all the Irish Catholics in the camp were taken; and it was announced that a second parade was to be held which only Irish Catholics were to attend. They were, it was understood, to be addressed by Sir Roger Casement. But that second parade did not take place. It had been intimated that, if it were held, there might be a disconcerting demonstration; and there was other evidence that the Ruhleben Irishmen were no friends of Germany. An Irishman was sounded by a minor German functionary, and asked whether he would not be glad of an opportunity of fighting against England.

'Well, sorr,' he replied, 'I'm always ready for a fight; and it may be that, if there was nobody else to fight, I'd like to fight the English; but I'm thinking that we'd better polish off you Germans first.'

Under these happy auspices the building of the city

began; and a homely touch was given to the process by the bestowal of English names upon the various quarters of the camp. The theatre, of which more presently, was the Ruhleben Empire. A large gate through which we had to pass was known as the Marble Arch. There was a shopping quarter called Bond Street, a slummy quarter called Whitechapel, and a literary quarter known as Fleet Street. Above all, there was a great open space always spoken of as Trafalgar Square. A topographical book might perfectly well be written about Ruhleben in the style of those works on Old London in which antiquaries delight.

Such a work would devote one of its chapters to the story of the Whitechapel fire and the facilities for getting out through the ruins for brief excursions in the country. The sentries on duty there—men of the Zivil Dienst instituted by Hindenburg—were custodians easily corruptible. They were bribed, not with money, to which they attached little importance, but with pots of dripping; and these bribes were so effective that, not content with looking the other way while prisoners scaled the barrier, they actually helped them to climb it, holding their rifles so that they could be used as stepping-stones. In the end, of course, this laxity was discovered and stopped; but the authorities took a lenient view of the offence.

About Trafalgar Square there is more to be said. It was situated opposite the main entrance to the camp, close to the Guard House, the offices of the military administration, the Casino restaurant, and the captains'

office; and it had a flagstaff on which, on the Kaiser's birthday, January 15, 1915, we saw the German imperial flag hoisted. The military authorities had made great preparations for the adequate celebration of the festival. There was to be divine service for the soldiers followed by a banquet for the officers. But when the officers arrived, in full-dress uniform, wearing all their decorations, the flag came down. There can be no harm, at this date, in admitting that a sailor had cut the rope in the course of the night; but it seemed better, at the time, to persuade Baron von Taube that the rope had been accidentally frayed. The explanation was accepted as partially—but only partially—acceptable. The search for a responsible individual was abandoned; but the captains were summoned in a body before all the German officers then in the camp, admonished in very violent language, and told that the whole camp would be confined to barracks for twenty-four hours.

It was the first time that punishment was inflicted. Later in the history of the camp it was repeated because some one had cut two small cockades from the cap of the sub-lieutenant in charge of the kitchens. On that occasion the camp announced its intention of taking 'reprisals,' and it did so in a manner which the military found very awkward. Owing to the completeness of the parcels supply, scarcely half the men in the camp used, at that time, to trouble to draw their rations. Now the word was passed round that every man must draw his rations; and the whole camp

marched to the kitchen singing 'Tipperary' and 'Rule, Britannia,' and demanding food. The authorities were not accustomed to cater for such large numbers, and there was not enough food to go round. Carts and motors had to be brought out and despatched to fetch what was wanted—the men waiting patiently for it, and chuckling at the confusion which they had caused.

To return, however, to Trafalgar Square. The name continued to be used throughout the whole history of the camp; and it was a very appropriate designation, for it was here that our public meetings were held. The first meeting took place at the end of 1916, when Mr Gerard informed the camp of the agreement entered into for the repatriation of all prisoners over forty-five years of age—an agreement, by the way, which was never fully carried into effect. The second meeting was held when Bishop Bury visited the camp with the permission of the two Governments. The report which the Bishop took back to England did not indeed give complete satisfaction in Ruhleben; but still, his visit was a great event.

'Never,' writes Mr Powell, 'shall I forget that sea of faces gazing up at the Bishop, or the tremendous cheer which greeted him when he delivered his message from the King and Queen. He had obtained permission from the commandant for the men to sing the national anthem; but he tactfully suggested that only the first and third verses should be sung. No doubt the reference to "knavish tricks" in the second stanza might have given offence; but few men realised the significance of

the omission at the time. A noteworthy fact, too, was that, at the far edge of the crowd, Count Schwerin and two or three other officers, who had been listening to the speech, raised their hands to their caps and remained at the salute while the anthem was being rendered. They believed, apparently, that they were listening to *Heil Dir im Siegerkranz*, which is written to the same tune as 'God Save the King.'

And then, in the days of the revolution, there was another remarkable scene. The notion, somehow or other, had come to be rooted in Germany, that the future reputation of the German people and the nature of their reception when they attempted to re-enter civilised society, would largely depend upon the reports of their behaviour brought home by Ruhleben men. Many Germans, though not all of them, had lately been guided in their behaviour by that belief. Nothing, therefore, was more natural than that the Social Democrats should seek to make a good impression before their prisoners left them. Accordingly Herr Wels, the revolutionary commandant of Berlin, and Dr Oscar Cohn came down to the camp to address them. They also spoke in Trafalgar Square.

'A good many men,' says Mr Powell, 'gathered round to listen. The gist of Wels' speech was that, though hatred had no doubt been bred in their hearts by the atrocious treatment meted out to them under the old *régime*, they must remember that the Social Democrats were as bitterly opposed as they to Prussian militarism, and that their one desire, now that the power of Prussian

militarism had been broken, was to live on terms of brotherly amity with their former enemies. Wels' speech, delivered in German, was very eloquent and made a considerable impression upon the men who understood it; but I declined to translate it to the others on the ground that I really did not feel capable of translating so long a harangue. I think it was the better course, though Dr Cohn had many claims upon our sympathy, having often in the past protested against the ill treatment of civil prisoners. One did not know, of course, how far the 'change of heart' extended, and a non-committal attitude seemed preferable.

'That, anyhow, was the last of our Trafalgar Square meetings; but I must still, before taking my leave of it, recall the very last scene which I witnessed in its precincts.

'It was in the midst of the arrangements for our departure. A first batch had left on November 22; a second and last batch was to leave on the morning of Sunday, November 24. All the surplus luggage had been collected and sent out under the control of the Netherlands Legation. A number of the prisoners' wives and children had been temporarily housed in the camp for the last night; and on the Saturday evening I was informed by the Soldiers' Council, that half the camp would be required for the accommodation of 1000 Russians returning from the Western front. I agreed to this on the understanding that sentries should be posted to prevent the Russians from entering either the stores or our half of the camp, to pillage, until we and

our luggage were out of the way; a very necessary precaution, for there was a great deal of food there to excite their cupidity.

'The Soldiers' Council promised, and kept their promise. Not a single Russian was allowed to pass through the Marble Arch into Trafalgar Square, till we had gone. By 10.30 a.m. on Sunday morning all our men were on the train ready to start; and I turned back, after saying good-bye to the Netherlands Minister, and the men who were remaining at the Legation to wind up our affairs, to take a last look at the camp. Not a soul was to be seen. Trafalgar Square was absolutely deserted. But then I observed a single figure—a tiny German soldier, about five feet high, staggering under a huge load of food-stuffs and other articles, collected from the various barracks, going across the square towards the commandant's office. It was no other than the President of the Soldiers' Council, now the commandant of the camp. While his colleagues were at the railway station seeing the prisoners off, he was taking advantage of their absence to have the first pick at what had been left behind without disturbance or competition.'

CHAPTER VII

RATIONS AT RUHLEBEN—THE DISHONESTY OF GRIESE THE CATERER—THE SKILLY RIOT—REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNED PLACED IN THE KITCHEN AS CONTROLLERS—THE CANTEENS TAKEN OVER BY THE CAPTAINS' COMMITTEE

RATIONS, at Ruhleben, were served out at the kitchens, and could be supplemented by purchases at the canteens. Questions relating to the two institutions tend to overlap; but they must be discussed separately, even at the risk of repetition.

It was obviously the duty of the German Government to supply at the kitchens all the food needed to keep the interned men in sound health. The duty was the more imperative because, of the 4000 men originally brought to the camp about 2500 were destitute. The German Government's method of fulfilling its obligation, was to enter into a contract with a man named Griese, who undertook to feed us for a payment of 66 pfennigs (about 7½d.) per head per day. This man was an unconscionable knave; and the manner in which he carried out his contract may be set forth in the notes which Mr Gribble jotted down at a time when his recollection of the food was fresh :—

'For breakfast we were supposed to have dry bread and coffee. The bread was of the celebrated K.K. variety—straw meal and potato meal being mixed

with the rye; and there was no question whatever about its being dry—such things as butter, margarine, marmalade, and jam were never given, even in the days when no scarcity in any of these articles was admitted. The so-called coffee was not coffee at all, but a decoction of acorns, served without milk, and with very little sugar. The midday meal consisted of a bowl of soup, supposed to contain meat, which, as a matter of fact, was stolen from it by the contractor. I wish he had not only stolen it, but eaten it, for then he would long ago have been beyond the need of human forgiveness; on the few occasions on which he forgot to steal it, the camp was swept by violent epidemics of ptomaine poisoning. In the evening he doled out repugnant chunks of blood sausage, which I never dared to taste, or else a thin, muddy cocoa, or a kind of skilly. That, for a long time, was actually all that the German Government gave British civil prisoners to eat; and the quality of the skilly was such that there was a Skilly Riot.

'Exactly what happened on that occasion nobody ever seemed to know; but there is some reason to believe that the sailors from Barrack IV. bombarded either the cook or the boiler—and very possibly bombarded both—with bricks and clods of earth. At all events, the firebell was rung, recalling us to our barracks, and soldiers with fixed bayonets expedited our return. I saw one of them chase an innocent spectator of the disturbance a hundred yards or more, with awful German oaths. But the captains rose to the occasion.

They collected samples of the skilly, took it to the commandantur, and besought the personnel to taste it before pronouncing judgment on the rioters.

'The request was admitted to be reasonable, and a skilly-taster was selected. Whether it was Count Schwerin or Baron von Taube who tried the mixture I did not hear. Whoever it was, one spoonful was enough for him. He spluttered furiously; and his wrath was instantly diverted from our heads on to that of the contractor. The skilly, he said, was unfit to set even before dogs; and he cancelled the punishment which he had decreed, and skilly disappeared for ever from the menu.'

In so far as this informal comment criticises the man Griese, it derives contemporary confirmation from an entry in the minutes of the captains' committee, made by the secretary, Mr J. P. Jones, and running thus :—

'An individual of the name of Griese who is labouring under the impression that he is adequately feeding the camp (he is, by the way, the caterer appointed to supply the camp) presumed upon his supposed services in this direction, to ask permission to attend one of the camp concerts. This permission was not granted either by the military authorities or ourselves, but he nevertheless made his appearance at the concert, attended by about half a dozen of his relatives, thereby creating a disturbance, and incidentally insulting one of the captains appointed to keep order. His presence was considered an outrage, and he further had the colossal

impertinence to place a contribution in the collecting box.'

On which report action was taken, Griese's contribution being returned to him with a polite note stating that the entertainment committee had no desire to participate in the profits which he was making out of the camp. The camp committee referred to in a previous chapter went further and published a minute drawing attention to the man's depredations; and that was the reason why Baron von Taube dissolved it. That action of his, however, did not imply any intention to take the contractor's part; and there were investigations and feeble attempts at reform. The captain of the camp was instructed to taste the food daily before it was distributed; but when he demanded that soup should be ladled out to him from the common tub, and not from a basin specially made savoury to deceive him, the contractor's assistants were insolent. The matter was again reported, and it was announced that the kitchens would thenceforward be placed under military supervision.

The change effected some improvement; but substantial reform came only when it was agreed that representatives of the interned should be placed in the kitchen as controllers. The controllers first appointed were Mr R. Carrad, one of the European directors of the Remington Typewriter Company, Mr Ernest L. Pyke, a London estate agent, and Mr Joseph Gellin, a Canadian veterinary surgeon, whose experience of animals qualified him to pass judgment on the quality

of meat. Subsequent controllers, appointed when releases or other causes created vacancies, were Mr George Ferguson, a well-known baritone singer, Dr Sumner Moore, a dentist who had taken his degree at Philadelphia, Captain Coates, a master mariner, Mr Cecil Breitmeyer, of the De Beers Mining Company, Mr Walter Dodd, a London produce broker, and Mr Broxsop, an organist and teacher of music. Truly a strange medley of men from many callings suddenly taking to a new trade! They all worked indefatigably and well; and not the least of the services which they rendered was the purchase of a meat safe from the camp fund—the Germans being unwilling to incur this outlay for the purpose of keeping the meat bought for prisoners in a state fit for human consumption.

The next milestone was passed soon after the American Ambassador's visit on March 3. The situation had, by this time, been complicated by a reduction of the bread rations, unaccompanied by any compensating increase of any of the other rations. The ration dwindled and dwindled until it fell to 200 grammes a day, which is about enough for an average man's breakfast. The quality at the same time deteriorated, the crust—and there was plenty of crust—being too hard for any but the strongest jaws to masticate. Men with money in their pockets were able to rub along somehow; but for the others there was a period of real hunger, the poor literally hankering after the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, and often going round from box to box, asking if any one had any bread which he could

spare. It will always be remembered against Germany that this distress was wantonly inflicted at a time when the country, if short of bread, had, at all events, no lack of other comestibles.

Men wrote to England, at that time, asking that bread might be sent to them by parcels post. A good deal arrived; but it will readily be believed that the condition in which it was delivered often left much to be desired. A mouldy portion had to be cut away from almost every loaf before the rest could be eaten; and some time elapsed before we discovered which kinds of bread stood so long a journey satisfactorily. Currant loaves, it was found, generally arrived in good condition; but Veda bread was even more to be depended upon. A mouldy Veda loaf was hardly ever seen. Nor would the German authorities consent to supply us with flour instead of bread and allow us to build our own bake-house. There was the German bread, they said, and we might take or leave it as we chose. We generally left it; and after a time arrangements were made for bread to be sent to us from Switzerland and Denmark.[1]

That was one way of easing the situation. Another was found in the taking over of the canteens by the captains' committee. This measure ensured that the right goods should always be on sale at reasonable

[1] The Swiss bread did not give satisfaction. It was very hard and full of holes; and many pictorial skits on it were circulated in the camp. On the other hand, the Danish bread, baked in Copenhagen from flour supplied from England, under the auspices of the British Red Cross, was excellent in quality and ample in quantity.

prices, for the benefit of the men drawing relief money; but the monopoly secured raised a question of administration on which a personal statement by Mr Powell will be in place :—

'A number of men were, at that time, trying to start small trading concerns in the camp—not always to the advantage of their customers, many of whom—more particularly the sailors—knew nothing about the prevalent German prices. This competition had to be put down firmly; not because we were afraid of it, or jealous of it, but for two other reasons. In the first place the German authorities objected to it because it did not yield them the 7½ per cent. commission which they exacted from us; in the second place we wanted to make sure that the men who were dependent upon the relief money for their supplementary supplies, got the fullest possible value for their expenditure.'

In April, it must be added, consignments of food began to arrive in bulk from England, for distribution in the camp; and the gradual extension of the parcels service, eventually taken in hand by the Central Prisoners of War Committee, provided the final solution of a problem which had, at one time, been very embarrassing. In this matter of supplies, indeed, Ruhleben got richer as Germany got poorer; and the prisoners, in the later years of the history of the camp, were far better fed than their gaolers, who sometimes fawned on them for food, and sometimes tried to steal from them. There was better fare, at that time, at a prisoners' mess

than at the Hotel Adlon; and Mr Powell's story of the looting of the barracks by the President of the Soldiers' Council after the camp had been cleared may be supplemented by another of his recollections.

'I happened,' he relates, 'to go out into Trafalgar Square one day in the small hours of the morning. As I approached the place, I heard a strange noise—the feet of men running hard, and the violent oaths of an angry Englishman. Turning a corner, in the dim light, I saw what was happening. A German soldier, armed to the teeth, was running for his life as if the whole British army were after him. A British sailor, absolutely unarmed, and very lightly clad, was bounding after him crying, "Stop thief!"—or words to that effect. The soldier had been trying to pilfer food in one of the barracks, and had been caught red-handed and had bolted, and did not dare to show fight for fear of the disciplinary consequences, if his officers came to know what he had been doing. He escaped, I believe, by the skin of his teeth, but without his booty.'

But that is an anticipation. We must turn back and look for signs of German endeavours to increase and improve the supplies. They are few, but not absolutely non-existent. It was announced, on March 16, 1915, that extra meat would be supplied on Sundays. A certain amount of meat was to be chopped up and made into rissoles. It was; but there were not rissoles enough to go round; and the arrangement had to be modified, with the result that the promised boon was reduced to one rissole per man every three weeks. 'Twas well; 'twas

something; but it was not a great deal. Yet the military authorities continued to be indignant at any suggestion that they were underfeeding their prisoners.

They were terribly upset, some time in July, 1915, because a man named Kirchner, who had escaped and been recaptured, stated, as his reason for running away, that if he had remained in the camp and tried to live on the rations, he would have starved to death. The captains, they said, must issue a statement to the effect that the rations were ample; but the captains did not see their way to do anything of the kind. The statement which they did draw up was to the effect that they did not suppose that any man in a normal condition of health would die of starvation on the rations provided, but that they thought they ought to be supplied with bread of a better quality, with margarine, and with more meat and fresh vegetables.

The commandant at first took the line which the beadle took towards Oliver Twist when he asked for more. For some days he refused to have anything whatever to say to the civil administration; but he ultimately changed his mind, sent for some of the captains, and informed them that there had been a regrettable misunderstanding, but that he would thenceforth do his best to give the camp sufficient to eat. Perhaps he did his best; but the improvement was hardly perceptible and was shortlived. As time went on, indeed, the rations got worse and worse, and scantier

and scantier. Potatoes were supposed to be our mainstay; but six weeks once passed without a single potato being brought into the camp; and we should, indeed, have been in a poor way if it had not been for our own administration and our friends in England and at the American Embassy—more particularly Dr Alonzo Taylor, to whose services more detailed acknowledgment shall be made in the chapter on our medical history.

Thanks to these efforts we were eventually able to dine fairly well, and to provide against occasional delays in the delivery of parcels by accumulating a reserve stock to be drawn upon in case of need.

CHAPTER VIII

MR POWELL'S DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CANTEENS—FACTS AND FIGURES

A CANTEEN of a sort was already doing business of a sort when we were gathered in. The lady exploiting it was the race-course caterer, and had acquired the exclusive right of trading within the precincts of the camp. She may have catered satisfactorily for sportsmen, but she was not catering satisfactorily for civil prisoners. Her store resembled a dilapidated shanty in the wild and woolly West; her customers had to wade through a quagmire in order to approach her counter; her staff consisted of a young woman, alleged by some of the younger prisoners to be of a flirtatious temperament, and some boisterous and unmannerly lads; her stock was inadequate, and her prices were exorbitant. Far from realising the possibilities of the situation, she had not even realised its necessities. It was obviously desirable to eliminate her; and a sub-committee was at once appointed to see what could be done.

The lady was suspicious of strangers; but she was, happily, already acquainted with Mr J. Swift, a trotting trainer and the captain of Barrack II.; and with his assistance and that of Mr J. P. Jones, the camp treasurer, Mr Powell succeeded in coming to terms with her. By

a contract, sanctioned by Count Schwerin, signed on March 8, 1915, Frau Wendel surrendered the sales department of the camp to the civil administration, on the understanding that she should buy for the camp on a commission—the camp, however, retaining the right to buy direct, and pay a much lower commission, if it were found advantageous to do so.

Even so, however, we could not immediately go full speed ahead. Amelunxen, the officer in charge of the commissariat, tried to step down before us and get the business into his own hands. He asked some questions as to our weekly requirements, and then ordered one of the wholesale houses in Berlin to despatch the goods indicated to the camp. They arrived on a Sunday in a snowstorm: four wagon-loads of miscellaneous commodities—hundredweights of sugar, more than a ton of cooked meat, thousands of sausages, and other stocks in proportion. We had not expected the things, and we did not know what to do with them; no officer in the camp, and no non-commissioned officer, could tell us what to do with them. The best course seemed to be to unload the wagons and store their contents until the commissariat officer came to the camp on the Monday.

'On his arrival,' writes Mr Powell, 'he came to the captains' office and asked me what I was going to do in the matter. As it was no part of our programme to sink into the position of servants or salesmen to the German military authorities, I informed him that I had no use whatever for these goods delivered on approval.

He tried to persuade me that the camp had ordered the stuff; but I insisted that the camp had done nothing of the kind. He then represented that the Berlin firm was supplying them at wholesale prices, would take back anything that was not sold, and would pay a five per cent. commission on all sales; but I declined to consider that offer. I further pointed out that many of the goods were perishable—that the sausages, for instance, of which he had supplied 6000, would certainly go bad before we could dispose of them; and one of the company imported a certain liveliness into the discussion by suggesting that the strings of sausages should be used to rope the fence.

'In the end, I suggested a compromise. We undertook to take over and do our best to sell the portion of the stock which we judged to be marketable, and to return whatever we could not sell. But we declined to take any commission from either the commissariat officer, or the firm as whose tout he was acting, and we gave him clearly to understand that we intended, for the future, to stand by the terms of the contract, approved by Count Schwerin, giving us a monopoly of trading rights in the camp.

'That intimation cleared the road, and we were able to get to business. The direction of the canteens was undertaken by Mr Swift, under whom worked Mr Faulkner, an accountant; and the accounts were kept under the supervision of Mr J. P. Jones, and audited periodically by chartered accountants. Subsequently Mr Swift's duties were taken over and ably

discharged by Mr Delahay Jones, whose previous experience in shopkeeping—he had kept a milliner's shop in Berlin—stood him in good stead. The history of the canteens under his management was one of continual expansion—the margin of profit being always kept as low as was compatible with solvency; the total turnover during the period approximated to £200,000; and the departments established were almost like those of Whiteley's or Selfridges' for multitude. They came to include :—

'1. A wet canteen for the sale of foodstuffs.
'2. A dry goods store.
'3. A tobacco shop.
'4. A light refreshment counter for the sale of lemonade and malt beer in summer, and tea and coffee in winter.
'5. A tailor's shop.
'6. An outfitter's shop.
'7. A boot-repairing shop.
'8. A watchmaker's establishment.
'9. A glazier's establishment.
'10. A printing department.
'11. A boiler house.
'12. A cookhouse.
'13. A carpenter's shop.
'14. A charging depot for electric accumulators.
'15. Private latrines.

'This list, printed without comment, would suffice to give a synoptic view of the building of our city. A

point, however, which must be emphasised is that there was no imported talent. Not only the organisers and the unskilled labourers, but also the tradesmen and the skilled artisans were discovered among the 4000 men whom the accident of war had thrown together. Some of them had to learn their trades before they could practise them; and the problem of procuring raw material was always a difficult one. These matters, however, will be better dealt with in detail in later chapters. Here it will be useful to interpolate a description of some of the more unique departments.

'The glazier's establishment was inaugurated because the bills of the German glazier who visited the camp became exorbitant, and the breaking of windows by boys playing rounders was a frequent occurrence. Benthin, whose acquaintance we have already made, raised some objection, being desirous of protecting German craftsmen from competition; but his objections were overruled by his superiors, and we installed our own glazier's shop under the direction of Mr Dalton, a young ship's officer, who also displayed talent as a signwriter, and produced many signboards for other tradesmen in the camp. The carpenter's shop was managed by Mr Osborne, a ship's engineer, who undertook most of the building alterations required from time to time.

'The boiler-house dates from February, 1915. Before that date—that is to say for a period of two months—it was absolutely impossible, except by subterfuge or

bribery, to obtain hot water for any purpose; and the neglect to provide it for so long in the dead of winter, is yet another of the scandals which those who endured it will long remember. After a while, however, we got our shed up. It contained one boiler holding about 25 gallons; but by 1918 we had ten boilers, each holding about 60 gallons. At first, in order to defray the cost of the installation, we had to sell hot water at a penny a quart; but after this initial outlay had been amortised, and a reserve fund created for further installations, the charge was reduced, and men could obtain as much hot water as they wanted for one pfennig.

'In spite of repeated applications, permission to erect a private cookhouse was not granted until the late spring of 1916. Having obtained it, I bought two kitchen ranges in Berlin—one of them the largest that I could find, and the other about half the size. Ships' cooks and stewards were engaged and placed in charge; and men could then have dishes specially cooked for them for trifling fees. It was their first chance of having their tinned foodstuffs properly prepared; and the innovation was very popular.

'The mention of the "accumulator shed" has probably puzzled the reader, and needs explanation. The trouble which it was designed to meet was that of the barrack lighting. This, as has already been mentioned, was so poor that it was impossible to read or write by it; and many men's eyesight was sustaining permanent injury. The use of candles or other open



Winter View from the Grand Stand: Spandau in the distance.



The Staff of the Ruhleben Laundry.

lights was strictly forbidden. It was then decided to find a small and suitable accumulator at as low a price as possible; and we eventually found a very useful one which would keep a three-candle power lamp going for about twenty-four hours—the cost of the accumulator and fittings being about ten marks. An accumulator charging-room was installed next door to our cinema; and as a transformer had had to be installed when we built the cinema, the same machine was used at night for the charging of the accumulators, at a charge of about 2d. per accumulator. By this means, it was made possible for every man to have his own private lamp at a trifling weekly cost; and I believe that, at the last, more than 2000 of these accumulators were in use.

'Thus did we work our way out of the dark age into which we had suddenly been plunged. As time proceeded, less and less friction hindered our operations; but, at the beginning, we had to surmount many obstacles and steer round many awkward corners. One of our first troubles was the necessity of surrendering our rights under a contract, taken over from Frau Wendel, for the delivery of 10 cwt. of margarine. The contractor professed inability to fulfil his obligation except at a ruinous loss; and though we ourselves were reluctant to let him off, the commandant intervened on his behalf and we had to do so. In other difficulties we were more fortunate; and we naturally had no scruple in buying up any British stock of butter, condensed milk, jam, or pickles, of which we could

hear, at a time when patriotic Germans were conscientiously responding to the appeal to go without these luxuries.

'Of one "trading with the enemy" case I have a lively recollection. The officer supervising the canteens informed me one day that, as he believed Nestlé's to be partly an English firm, we must not sell Nestlé's milk, but must deal only in German condensed milk. I promptly passed this news on to Mr Swift, adding that I feared that there would be an inspection of the canteen on the following day. Mr Swift told me that he had, in fact, about 5000 tins of Nestlé's milk in stock, but that he would take very particular care that none of it should be identified by the inspector. Nor was it. Mr Swift and his staff sat up all night removing the labels from the 5000 tins, with the result that, when the inspector arrived, he found nothing in the place but alleged German milk, alleged to have been delivered without labels.

'Another interesting incident occurred in 1915, when eggs were beginning to get scarce. We passed the word round the camp that men had better make as many meals off eggs as possible, as we were going to supply them for a price considerably less than that for which they could be procured outside. Our idea was to induce them to build their bodies with proteid while they had the chance, before the cold weather set in. To that end, we sold the eggs at a loss, drawing on our accumulated surplus; and for a fortnight or so we disposed of about 10,000 eggs a day. At the end of that

time there came a complaint from Berlin that our purchases had sent the prices of eggs soaring, to the serious detriment of hotel and restaurant proprietors. Unquestionably they had; but we were able to persuade the adjutant that they had not, and to continue our operations as before.

'In proof of the variety and magnitude of the business done by the canteens, I print two financial statements which Mr Delahay Jones has kindly compiled for me. The first shows the turnover; the second the profits and losses of the various departments. The figures in each case relate to marks and pfennigs.'

TURNOVER CANTEEN DEPARTMENT

	1915 (7 months)	1916	1917
Boots	2232·05	16445·65	12119·40
Canteens	408606·53	194858·14	79114·16
Pond Stores	113212·58		
Barbers	774·45	10342·28	12790·80
Carpenter	9971·35	27432·11	29927·38
Tailor	6043·35	20721·	10327·35
Dry Stores	181828·40	228187·24	194535·87
Boiler House	27264·85	30823·25	28603·95
Outfitting	41206·44	57819·74	43799·42
Private Latrines	2554·05	5885·95	4601·15
Watchmaking	1999·95	6079·87	2176·40
Book and Music	2405·60	15958·45	11545·
Photographs		25328·55	11984·60
Printing		13487·54	14548·35
Camp Messenger		1841·92	3395·65
Cookhouse		14632·25	20258·05
Tobacco			95669·52
Special Orders			4113·20
Charging Room			10256·75
Glazier			3011·55
Exchange			180·85
Stationery			4834·95
	798099·60	659843·94	527799·35

CANTEENS.

Profits and Losses for the Year.

	1915 (7 months)		1916		1917	
	Loss	Profit	Loss	Profit	Loss	Profit
Boots		254·39		121·99	121·91	
Canteen	14832·50		3665·39		2770·03	
Pond Stores		3733·39				
Barbers		97·02	2697·94			815·19
Carpenter		336·76		1105·19		1006·50
Tailor	820·87			354·33		408·60
Dry Stores		20514·18	836·03		1251·19	
Boiler House		12141·52		4214·10		220·67
Outfitting		1130·32		277·82		96·04
Private Latrines		1845·25		3169·10		975·80
Watchmaking		584·10				
Book and Music		169·30				
Photographs				1930·15		456·05
Printing				3288·94		1639·03
Camp Messenger Service			292·18			154·95
Cookhouse			2133·30			5073·73
Tobacco					980·30	
Special orders						58·27
Charging room						1052·46
Glazier						116·70
Exchange						98·75
Stationery						279·65
Profit	25152·86		4836·78		7328·96	
	40806·23	40806·23	14461·62	14461·62	12452·39	12452·39

'The statements, it will be seen, are not complete. They do not, that is to say, cover the whole period during which we traded. They are Mr Delahay Jones's accounts, and only begin at the date in 1915 at which Mr Delahay Jones took charge. The accounts for 1918 cannot be given, because the armistice and the subsequent repatriation of prisoners interrupted proceedings, and the books were left at the Dutch Legation in Berlin, in order that Mr J. P. Jones might have them by him for reference, while finally winding up the affairs of the camp. The full and exact statement will, by the time these lines are printed, have been placed in the hands of the British Government. The figures given here, however, are correct as far as they go, and show on how large a scale the camp succeeded in trading; but they are not the accounts of a corporation trading for profit.

'We did not want a profit; we desired only to pay our way. The principle of recouping losses made by selling necessaries below cost price, out of profits made on the traffic in luxuries, was deliberately adopted for the benefit of the camp. In 1915, for instance, we lost, with our eyes open, about 15,000 marks on the sale of margarine, butter, eggs, and meat; and the net profit shown by the accounts of that year was accumulated in consequence of the decision of the Finance Committee, to amass a reserve fund in view of emergencies. In 1916 and 1917, our profits were very small, as our sole object was to avoid making a loss; and speaking as a business man of some experience, I have no hesitation

in saying that, in view of the constantly fluctuating prices of commodities, the success of a department controlling so many sub-departments, in coming out with a margin of only 4000 marks to the good on a turn-over of nearly 700,000 marks, was a marvellous piece of management, reflecting the very highest credit on Mr Delahay Jones and his subordinates.'

CHAPTER IX

THE MEDICAL HISTORY OF RUHLEBEN—DR GEIGER CRITICISED —SCANDALOUS CONDITIONS AT THE LAZARETT—THE DRUNKARD IN CHARGE—DR WEILER'S SANATORIUM—THE DENTIST —THE OCULIST—MR JEPHSON AS MEDICAL PRACTITIONER —HIS PRACTICE SUPPRESSED BY DR GEIGER

In a camp in which nearly five thousand men, raked in without reference to their health or their physique, were underfed and overcrowded, sickness was certain to occur, and, if it were contagious, to spread. The Germans, that is to say, had deliberately created a difficult medical problem; they were to show themselves callous and incompetent in dealing with it.

Their first medical officers were Dr Lachmann and Dr Reiche. The former looked benevolent, and was reputed to be considerate; but he died of appendicitis after a few weeks of duty. The latter was a military surgeon of the most brutal type, disposed to scamp his work and treat every patient as a malingerer. His consultations, which began at 8.0 a.m., were often finished by 8.30; and it is related of him that on one occasion he spent ten minutes smoking cigarettes outside the door of a stable, within which a prisoner was suffering agony from gall-stones, and finally walked away without doing anything to relieve the sufferer. It was a fortunate thing for the camp that he was transferred to another post in the course of the first winter.

About his successor, Dr Geiger, who made a much longer stay, opinions differed—perhaps because he was a man of varying moods and one who contrived, in the course of time, to rise on stepping-stones of his dead self to higher things. A minute, meagre, cadaverous man, he peered out upon the world through goggles nearly as large as gig-lamps, and has been compared to 'a death's head moth determined to look jolly.' He had come from civil practice in the Harz Mountains, where, as he once told a sick man, he had 'left his feelings behind.' Wearing his uniform uneasily, as if he had put it on to attend a fancy dress ball, he appeared to be torn by two conflicting emotions—a venomous hatred of Englishmen, and a sincere respect for his profession. On the whole, he knew his business; but he constantly refused to use anæsthetics when performing minor operations—and he was prone to neglect his duty in order to vindicate his dignity. Frequently, for example, he turned prisoner patients who were seriously ill into the cold passage while he prescribed pills and poultices for the simple ailments of German soldiers; and he rarely if ever consented to visit any patient in his box or loft, generally insisting that the bedridden must be carried to him on stretchers if they desired his advice.

The conditions in which he administered that advice were grotesque and scandalous. There was no waiting-room; the patients awaited their turns in the passage, which was not heated, even in the dead of winter, and in which there were no seats, except the window-sills.

Stretcher patients—and the stretchers were very primitive appliances until proper ones were bought out of the camp maintenance fund—were laid on the floor. Every now and again, some patient fainted and fell on the floor. It might be necessary to wait an hour or more in order to get attention; and though Dr Geiger was more conscientious than Dr Reiche, he sometimes cut his consultations short and departed, leaving his patients unattended to. Here is a description of the scene within, jotted down while the recollection of it was still fresh :—

'A group—one might almost say a mob—of patients used to be admitted simultaneously, and no man, however intimate his complaint, had any chance of confidential treatment. While one man was being ausculted, one saw another lying stripped on a dilapidated sofa, awaiting examination for suspected appendicitis, a third having his ears syringed, a fourth having the rash on his chest painted with iodine, a fifth having a cut or a sore bandaged, etc. Even when teeth were drawn, the room was not cleared. Those who liked to stay and look on were at liberty to do so, though the sensitive were free to retire. The groans of the wounded, on these occasions, were audible all down the passage; and the extraction was so hurriedly performed that the doctor was alleged, on one occasion, to have drawn, not only the wrong tooth, but the tooth of the wrong man, operating on the interpreter instead of the sufferer, and hustling them both out of the room before they had time to expostulate.'

Possibly this last story is not so much true as well-invented; but there are other and graver stories which call for serious investigation—the story, for instance, of what the whole camp angrily spoke of as 'the murder of the jockey.' That is another subject which may be best illustrated by a reproduction of notes made after such restricted inquiry as was possible at the time :—

'That the poor jockey was turned out of the hospital and sent back to the camp at a time when he was dying of heart disease; that he knew his condition, and broke down and cried like a child in Dr Geiger's consulting-room, pleading that he might be returned to the hospital; that Dr Geiger refused his request, saying—and even writing to those who pleaded his case—that he was not half so bad as they thought, and that he died a few days afterwards; all these are facts which seem to be well established. But there was also a certain *generalartz* from Berlin mixed up in the case, inspecting the hospital and weeding out malingerers. It is possible that Dr Geiger was afraid of him, or was overruled by him, or thought that he ought to defer to his wider experience. I have not the data for deciding; nor do I know whether it is true, as was said, that Dr Geiger was reprimanded for endorsing the *generalartz's* mistake instead of correcting it. What I do know is that the death seemed to give Dr Geiger a shock—that he gave one the impression, for a time, of a man who had been frightened out of his boots.'

The matter, it will be seen, is clouded with a doubt;

but it does appear that Dr Geiger experienced the gooseflesh which properly assails a professional man, when he perceives that a grave mistake has had the gravest consequences; and it is the general verdict that, from the time of that lamentable error, he became more attentive and efficient, and was inclined to favour reform, though too weak to press for it in the face of obstruction from his superiors or passive resistance from his subordinates. He would probably have liked to reform, though he did not succeed in reforming, the hospital referred to in the notes quoted, and commonly known as the lazarett.

The original hospital was a small room with six beds and a bath tub, but without sanitary accommodation, close to the consulting-room. Once sufferers from dysentery were not only sent there but locked up there, and severely reprimanded because of the use they had been obliged to make of the bath. This room, however, was taken over, at an early date, for administrative purposes, and the patients were transferred to the aforesaid lazarett, which was situated about a quarter of a mile from the camp in the Auswandererbahnhof—a place in which steerage immigrants used to be disinfected before their departure to the United States.

It was the place to which all the prisoners were periodically taken for warm shower-baths; and they were the filthiest baths that any man among them had ever seen. The floor on which men stood to dress and undress was always—until we provided and paid men

to keep the place clean—covered with a slimy mud deposited from the boots of previous bathers, and the clothes were hung so close together that the lice, from which the camp was by no means free, could crawl from the costumes of the filthy to those of the clean. The hospital was just the sort of hospital that one would expect to find in such an establishment: a place so appalling that the German authorities were ashamed of it, and would have concealed its existence from the medical inspector sent by the American Embassy, if a prisoner had not whispered to him in undiplomatic language which provoked his curiosity: 'For God's sake don't go without inspecting the lazarett; you'll find it bloody awful.'

This undiplomatic description was quite just. Save for the fact that they had beds and could lie in them —very hard beds provided with very coarse sheets— the patients might just as well not have been in hospital at all. The only special food supplied to them as invalids was a daily cup of beef-tea. Beyond that, they received only the ordinary camp rations—carried over to them in buckets and cold before they reached them. If they needed 'feeding up' they had to procure the food at their own charge on their own initiative. There was little space outside the ward for exercise; and the wards themselves were over-heated, stuffy, and filthy. The smoke from passing railway engines deposited a coating of grime on the floor, tables, and beds. The sick men had to wait on each other, and do their own cleaning up; the doctor's visits were brief and cursory, and the

general state of neglect may be judged from the fact that a negro patient, too ill to move, once lay for nine days, performing his natural functions in his bed.

The man in charge—it would be absurd to give him any professional designation—was a non-commissioned officer named Wettin, in civil life an apothecary's assistant, described by a prisoner who had seen a good deal of him as 'one of the most evil, drunken scoundrels whom I have come across among Prussian under-officers'; and this truculent rascal alternately hectored and hoodwinked the medical officer, who ought to have dismissed him in disgrace.

Nor do these statements rest upon the loose gossip of irritable invalids. The captains' committee obtained permission to appoint hospital visitors; and from them they obtained authentic information. The first visitor was Professor F. Sefton Delmer, who has since acted as correspondent of the *Daily Mail* in Switzerland and Germany. The second was Mr Melville, a Hamburg merchant. Both these gentlemen furnished formal reports—to the effect, among other things, that there was, in the hospital, no fuel or kitchen range for the heating of invalid's food, and that it had been necessary to advance small sums of the money to some of the sailors, in order that they might purchase the nourishment which they needed to keep them alive. Mr Melville was so disgusted and indignant at what he saw that, having satisfied himself that the captains were powerless to remedy the state of affairs, he sought

and obtained an interview on the subject with Mr Gerard.

It was a courageous thing to do in view of the rancour which the Germans seldom failed to display towards those who put them in the wrong; and Mr Melville paid the price of his temerity. His permit to visit the hospital was withdrawn, and a black mark was probably put against him, with the result that he never benefited by any of the exchanges of prisoners though fully qualified to do so, but fell ill in the camp and died of the *sequelæ* of rheumatic fever, in the sanatorium to which he was removed. Meanwhile the abuses continued, in spite of the remonstrances of the American Embassy, for whose visit of inspection, indiscreetly announced beforehand, deceptive preparations were doubtless made. Wettin continued to get drunk, brewing grog for himself and his boon companions with the alcohol supplied for lotions and embrocations; and it was not until he collapsed and fell on his face on the floor in the presence of Dr Geiger's successor, that he was dismissed.

In the interval, however, as the result of pressure applied, not only by the American Embassy, but also by the camp, improvements in certain other directions had been effected; and the most conspicuous of these was the arrangement that a certain number of invalids should be transferred to an establishment known as Dr Weiler's Sanatorium, where they were lodged for a charge of seven marks a day, paid by the British Government, with the option of obtaining better food

and treatment if they cared to pay additional fees out of their own pockets. It was not an ideal arrangement. It would have been more satisfactory if the invalids could have been sent to the health resorts suited to their several ailments. But it was the best arrangement to which the consent of the military authorities could be obtained.

Those who paid the supplementary charges had not, perhaps, a great deal to complain of, except that Dr Weiler was making an undue profit out of them; but it would have been easier for the others to prove that they were being cheated by Dr Weiler than for Dr Weiler to prove that they were being pampered. The following notes on the conditions in which his patients lived were written out in the autumn of 1915 :—

'They were housed, four, five, or six, or more in one room, which is said to be sparsely furnished. Room for six inmates would contain, for instance, only one wash-basin, and none of the other utensils usually required in a bedroom. The food was poor, and the prisoners got no attendance whatever, had to make their own beds, fetch their own food, and wash up their own plates, etc. Some of the younger and less helpless prisoners were called upon to do other housework. At the time these arrangements were concluded, the usual charge in a first-class *pension* in that neighbourhood was five marks a day for full board and lodging; and that, of course, entitled the boarder to a well-furnished bedroom to himself, the usual attendance, and the use of

the public rooms of the establishment. Although the cost of living in Germany had risen considerably, the charges of hotels and boarding-houses had become much lower, so it is obvious that Dr Weiler was grossly overcharging the British Government. A large proportion, if not the majority, of the prisoners at Weiler's are pro-Germans, and some of them are not British subjects at all. I was told that a lunatic of unknown nationality who could give no account of himself, was kept there at the expense of the British taxpayer.'

With all its drawbacks, the existence of the sanatorium was, no doubt, a gain to the camp, though it would have been a superfluous institution if the Germans had accepted the obligations towards their prisoners, shouldered as a matter of course in most civilised countries. They preferred to charge them extortionate fees for a minimum of comfort; and other medical treatment for which they persisted in charging fees, even to the destitute, was that provided by the dentist and the oculist.

For the first nine months or so, a German dentist attended the camp twice a week. He brought very few instruments with him, and operated without antiseptic precautions. His incompetence was so gross that one of Dr Geiger's orderlies—a genial and intelligent Alsatian—more than once recommended a man to avoid him, and consult a prisoner dentist who was practising *sub rosa* in the camp. His fees were so extravagant that a notice was once given out in the barracks,

inviting those whom he had overcharged to lodge formal complaints, though it is not on record that the lodging of a complaint ever led to the recovery of money. Eventually he was dismissed; and a further step in the march of progress was taken by the equipment, at the cost of the camp, of a surgery in which two fully qualified dental surgeons among the prisoners—Dr Rutterford and Dr Moor—practised to the complete satisfaction of those who needed to avail themselves of their services.[1]

An oculist the camp could not furnish; but an oculist was badly needed, for the drifting sand of the stable-yards, infected by so many men's expectoration, set up a bad type of conjunctivitis. The American Ambassador, therefore, made an arrangement with Dr Halben, whose name is not unknown to the medical profession in England, and who was unquestionably competent. The question was raised, however, whether his skill quite warranted the extraordinary expedition with which he hurried through his work; and there were differences of opinion as to the correct interpretation of the agreement entered into concerning the fees. The arrangement was consequently cancelled; while Dr Halben proceeded to serve writs on his patients. Mr Wimpfheimer acted as their legal adviser; and the

[1] There were other dentists in the camp; but it was judged expedient to sanction the practice only of men who had the full qualifications of dental surgeons. Anæsthetics were not given in the camp because so many men were in a condition in which their administration would have been dangerous. Arrangements were made that cases requiring their use should be treated at a clinic in Berlin.—J.P.

matter was still *sub judice* when the armistice was signed. Meanwhile, Dr Halben's successor, Dr Licht, was giving satisfaction.

To return, however, to the normal medical treatment, officially and gratuitously provided. The first—and indeed almost the last—thing to be said about it is that it was grossly inadequate, and that the men in the camp set to work, almost at once, to supplement it from their own resources, finding the money for the provision of the medical supplies and comforts, which any decent medical administration would have conceived it to be its own duty to provide. They bought kegs of aperient pills, and established distributing centres in the various barracks. In the face of official obstruction, they bought eggs and milk for the delicate. They even subscribed for such surgical appliances as bandages and trusses; for the German administration called upon the prisoners to pay for these things—and also for any but the simplest and cheapest medicines—out of their own pockets. And one of them—Mr Jephson, who had considerable medical knowledge—set up in his horse-box as a rival practitioner to Dr Geiger, after procuring a stock of drugs from Berlin.

The competition was badly needed, if only in order to stimulate Dr Geiger's energy. The competitor, assisted by English medical students, did specially useful work at a time when sore throats of mysterious origin were raging in the camp; but his career of usefulness was short. Dr Geiger heard what was going on, and exploded in a fit of professional jealousy. He sent

for Mr Jephson, and while Mr Jephson was being cross-examined in Dr Geiger's consulting-room, Dr Geiger's orderlies raided Mr Jephson's box and carried off all his drugs. It was done in a high-handed manner which aroused indignation in the camp; but Mr Jephson had the gratification of knowing that both his practice and the extinction of it marked stages on the path of progress, Dr Geiger became thereafter more attentive towards his own obligations; and the next movement towards reform—a movement, this time, which was to have far-reaching results—emanated from his consulting-room.

CHAPTER X

THE CONVALESCENT BARRACK—ADMIRABLE WORK DONE IN IT BY MR LAMBERT AND HIS ASSISTANTS—DR KAPP—DR LORENZ—DR ALONZO TAYLOR—DR ROEMER—DISGRACEFUL STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE WAR PRISONERS' HOSPITAL

ONE would have expected it to be obvious to the Germans that a doctor practising in an English camp ought to know the English language; but Dr Geiger, like his predecessors, could neither speak nor read English, and had little more than a nodding acquaintance with French. Most of the patients, therefore, had to bring interpreters to expound their symptoms and translate the medical directions. At first, each barrack appointed a separate interpreter; and the panel of interpreters included, as might have been expected, some men who took no particular interest in the work and had no special competence for it; some of them lacking the requisite human sympathy, and others, though fluent enough in conversation on the topics of the day, having an imperfect technical vocabulary. But there was one outstanding exception—Mr Stanley Lambert; and this is Mr Lambert's chapter.

Mr Lambert had had no medical training whatsoever—he was the continental representative of a London firm of coal exporters, arrested at Hamburg, where he had endured the horrors of the hulks.

He acted as medical interpreter for Barrack VIII., and also took an active part in the administration of the fund subscribed to purchase those medical comforts which the German Government ought to have provided, but did not. Through this double activity he was in closer contact than any one else with the medical difficulties of the camp; and he proceeded to instal himself, without invitation but with the tacit approval of every one concerned, as the permanent intermediary between the doctor and his patients. The other interpreters ceased to attend, perceiving that their attendance was superfluous; and Mr Lambert gradually took sole charge, guarding the doctor's door, regulating the queue which awaited admission, translating, suggesting, and advising, never failing in the tact on which there were continuous demands, and coming to be recognised by both doctor and patients as indispensable.

That was the beginning—a small beginning, but the prelude of much greater things. The real opportunity came a little later when Dr Geiger decided that, as he was powerless to reform the appalling conditions at the lazarett, there should be built, within the precincts of the camp, a kind of convalescent home, to be known as the Schonungsbaracke, or Invalids' Barrack, and Mr Lambert was offered, and accepted, the office of superintendent of that barrack.

There had been, indeed, a previous Invalids' Barrack under the captaincy of Mr Alexander Richardson; but it had been a failure, though not a failure for which the captain could be held to blame. It was created quite

early in the history of the camp, when the Germans considered civil prisoners entitled to little more indulgence than convicts. It was a wooden hut, closely resembling all the other wooden huts—differing from them only in the fact that it possessed a stove. There were no beds in it. The invalids slept on the floor on their straw-sacks, packed as closely as they would have been in any other part of the camp, though some of the men's ailments must have made them very unpleasant neighbours. They were given neither special food nor special attention; their captain had no powers, no opportunities—little to do except look on; and their one incidental advantage lay in the fact that the non-commissioned officer and soldier placed in charge of them happened to be good fellows, who used to be overheard through the chinks in their bedroom wall, talking the social democratic heresy (Spartacist variety) at the dead of night. Nothing was lost when, on the great day of the segregation, the barrack was assigned to pro-Germans and its previous inmates were dispersed.

The new Invalids' Barrack, though at first far from perfect, was a very different place; and a description of it in its original condition has been provided by one of its inmates :—

'This hut contained a waiting lobby, a room for the sanitary non-commissioned officers, a surgery, a small room for reserve stocks of medicine, two W.C.'s, one of which was locked and reserved exclusively for the soldiers' use, the *revier Krankenstube*, or surgery ward, containing twelve beds, not superposed, twelve military

night tables, two long wooden tables and benches, the room for chronic invalids, containing twenty-eight beds, superposed, and a room for the doctor's orderly. The only water tap in the hut was in the surgery—a brass hand-tap below which was a narrow shallow sink, so that the floor in the neighbourhood of the tap was always wet. The surgery ward was simply supplied with the ordinary military bed, and patients, when they were ordered in, had to bring their own straw sack and rugs, neither of which were usually over clean. As the door leading to the surgery was always locked, there were no means of the sick even obtaining drinking water, leaving the matter of washing or bathing entirely out of the question. When this was pointed out to Dr Geiger, he remarked: 'Die Leute können sich nicht wenigstens unter der Wasserleitung besudeln'—'anyhow, the men won't be able to get in a mess under the tap.' There were no facilities for cooking. Dr Geiger remarked that the only advantage was that the patients had not so far to walk for their food.'

Such was the hut into which Mr Lambert was, so to say, pitched, with a number of patients and liberty to make what he could of his limited opportunities. It was a position in which failure would have been easy, and success was possible only to a man of tact, energy, initiative, and talent for organisation, always ready to assume responsibility, and not afraid of breaking rules in emergencies. All these qualities, however, were happily forthcoming. Two energetic and competent lieutenants were found in Mr Albert Smith of Shields,

and Mr John Bean of Goole, who undertook to act as stewards of the barrack. They remained at their posts until they were exchanged in January, 1918; and the success achieved was continuous and progressive.

The first thing needful was to provide food suitable for the delicate—a thing in which, as we have already seen, no help was ever to be looked for from the Germans. Men whose parcels were well stocked and numerous, offered what they could spare in the way of tinned soup, condensed milk, and biscuits; and an appeal to friends in England met with a liberal response. The Central Prisoners of War Committee, the Khaki Prisoners of War Fund, the Lady Dodds' Prisoners of War Fund, the Prisoners of War Help Committee, the Invalids' Comfort Fund, under the able management of Mrs Bromley Davenport at Hove, and the Copenhagen Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, as well as a number of private benefactors, regularly despatched generous supplies, not only of food, but also of blankets, clothing, medicine, and bandages. Scores of parcels consigned to the barrack were frequently delivered by a single post. Eventually, as a result of constant pressure, and in spite of Dr Geiger's opposition, the barrack was provided with a small kitchen for invalid cookery; while the patients themselves turned its bare precincts into a flower garden.

Thus comfort was fought for, worked for, and achieved, until what was at first a poorly-furnished hut with few conveniences became what boarding-house advertisements call a 'home from home'—a sanatorium



'Camouflage': The Barbed Wire Fence hidden by Shrubs and Creepers.

far more popular than Dr Weiler's profiteering establishment, to which it became customary to send men from other parts of the camp for a few weeks' change of air and scene. A majority of the permanent inmates, however, were elderly and invalided seamen who ought to have been repatriated on the ground that their detention involved cruel danger to their health. Theoretically, the German Government was always willing to permit the return of such men. Practically it was always difficult to persuade Dr Geiger that the principle ought to be applied to any particular case; and in this connection Mr Lambert rendered valuable and indefatigable service.

The men, as may be supposed, knew no German, and were quite incapable of pleading their own cause. They needed an advocate, and Mr Lambert assumed that office. He singled out likely cases, mastered the details of the symptoms, and drew Dr Geiger's attention to them. He was not satisfied with doing this once, but brought his men up to the doctor again and again, insisting that they were getting worse and worse, week after week, and, if necessary, month after month, until he got his way. He would have got it more often than he did had it not been for the obstructive and inhuman attitude of the German Admiralty, which once replied to medical representations in favour of the release of certain sailors with the callous message : 'We don't care if they rot there.' In that matter, German obstinacy remained adamant until the end; but in other aspects the attitude of the authorities, and

more particularly of the medical officers, gradually changed for the better.

The principal improvements date from the appointment, at his own request, of Dr Kapp to act as Dr Geiger's assistant. Dr Kapp, though titularly Dr Geiger's junior, was his senior in years, and a man of much better professional and social standing. In Berlin he was known as a dermatologist; but he had also practised in the West End of London as a 'beauty' specialist. He spoke English perfectly, had none but pleasant recollections of his sojourn in the country, which he had not left until after the outbreak of war, and felt that Ruhleben was the place in which he could most usefully mitigate the sufferings of war. His good influence is said to have been felt, not only in the Invalids' Barrack, but also in other quarters of the camp. He certainly had a great deal of influence over Dr Geiger, who had no influence whatever over him, but allowed himself to be conducted into sympathetic courses.

When Dr Geiger was transferred to other duties, Dr Kapp found an acceptable collaborator in Dr Lorenz, an elderly and kind-hearted gentleman whom all his patients praised,[1] and subsequently in Herr Schumann and Herr Marcuse, medical students in their final year, of whom report also spoke favourable. At the time of the Revolution, Dr Kapp changed his clothes without changing his professional manner, announcing that he

[1] At the time of Mr Powell's illness, Dr Lorenz sacrified several days' leave in order to see him through a crisis.

could do his work as well in mufti as in uniform, and that he meant to stick to it. He did stick to it until the train started for Sassnitz, and would have travelled to Sassnitz with his patients if sudden illness had not compelled him to leave them in Mr Lambert's charge.

It was under Dr Kapp's *régime* that the efficiency of the hospital organisation was tested by epidemics; and a few words must next be said about these.

Ptomaine poisoning, or something very closely resembling it, was the first cause of 'mass illness' in the camp. It was intermittently epidemic there—the attendant phenomena furnishing a crushing commentary on the American Ambassador's suggestion that the latrines should be transferred to the race-course, on the ground that men needed to visit them only in the daytime. Opinions differed as to whether rotten fish, rotten meat, or rice swept up, together with the excrements of mice, from the floors of filthy granaries, was the most frequent cause. German measles came next; but the outbreak was mild and hardly mattered. Then, in the late summer and early autumn of 1915, virulent boils most obstinate to treatment became alarmingly prevalent. The deficiency of the food in both calories and vitamines was obviously responsible; and an improved parcels service was the remedy indicated. It is a matter in which the camp owed a great deal to the representations of Dr Alonzo Taylor, of the American Embassy, who sacrificed himself to the extent of living on the camp rations for several successive days—taking precautions to see that no portions were specially selected

for him—and pressing for reform with the authority of a dietetic expert. His interference was too energetic to please the Germans, and his visits had to cease before his task was completed. There still remained room for reform when his interrupted work was taken over by Dr Roemer of the Dutch Legation.

A special camp committee was appointed to draw up a list of hygienic defects for Dr Roemer's guidance; and Dr Roemer inspected the kitchen books, which showed the quantity and nature of the food served, and the number of men among whom it was divided. He pronounced the provision disgracefully inadequate, and extorted some concessions which Dr Taylor had failed to obtain. It was, for instance, as the result of his representations that rations of margarine, sugar, and jam were supplied for the first time about three years after the institution of the camp.

Meanwhile the camp had to fight two other epidemics; the one of dysentery, and the other of influenza.

The outbreak of dysentery occurred in the summer of 1917, and was attributed to the water drawn from a pump in one of the stable yards, infected, in all probability, by infiltration from the latrines. It was a bad outbreak, of a bad type. There were approximately 300 cases, many of them extremely serious, with high temperature. The patients were isolated in a hut just outside the camp, afterwards used for tuberculous cases. Mr William Branson and Mr Digby Lawson, who had previously been co-operating in the management of the

Invalids' Barrack, voluntarily took charge of the isolation hut, and were completely cut off from the rest of the camp for several weeks. Mr Lawson contracted the disease in a very violent form, and had constant relapses and recurrences until he was at last transferred to internment in Holland. The value of the services rendered by him and Mr Branson is attested by the fact that there were no fatal cases.

In the summer of the following year the Spanish influenza appeared. The first case, presenting no pronounced symptoms, perplexed the physicians for two or three days; but the sudden occurrence of fifteen similar cases cleared up their doubts, and the disease then spread rapidly. Of the 2300 men at that time in the camp, about 1600 were attacked. There were both simple cases and complicated cases—the complications including bronchitis, pneumonia, liver trouble, and violent bleeding of the nose. Both Dr Kapp and Herr Schumann caught the complaint, though they were not, happily, incapacitated at the same time; and most of the hard work involved in fighting the epidemic fell to the organisation centred at the Invalids' Barrack.

Volunteers were called for; and as the pro-German element had by that time been pretty thoroughly weeded out of the camp, practically all those who were not themselves laid up came forward. The pneumonia cases were removed to the lazarett, which Dr Kapp had insisted upon reforming; the serious cases of simple influenza were detained in the Invalids' Barrack and another hut set apart for them; the less grave cases had

to be left in the horse-boxes and the lofts. It was materially impossible for the doctors to keep a constant eye upon so many patients, so widely scattered; and a medical corps had to be improvised to assist them. The nucleus of the corps was furnished by three British medical students, Messrs Flint, Douthwaite, and Garden, who, having been captured at an early stage of their training, had not yet supplemented their scientific knowledge with clinical experience, and Messrs A. S. Belmont, T. W. Wilson, Alec Underwood, and R. Cheeseman, who had joined Mr Lambert after the departure of Messrs Branson and Lawson. These gentlemen worked indefatigably, nursing and watching cases, and reporting any appearance of change which called for medical intervention. Other men, who had not even their medical knowledge, worked with them; and though the majority of the workers found themselves incapacitated within thirty-six hours, fresh relays of workers were always ready to step forward and take their places—the victims themselves generally returning to duty before they were quite convalescent.

It was a great effort, and it was crowned with success, for of the 1600 cases only two were fatal. While the plague was at its height, an order came from Berlin to the effect that the camp should be divided into two parts by a barbed wire fence, and that the gates in it should be opened only at intervals of ten minutes. Lieutenant-Colonel von Reichenbach, who was then commandant, had nothing to do with the order, which was stated to have been issued as a reprisal for some

measure taken in a camp in England, and consulted the captain of the camp as to the best means of minimising the inconvenience which it was bound to cause; but it was nevertheless a great impediment to the medical work. The victory over influenza was, in short, in the main a British victory, gained in the face of obstacles, and the upshot of the battle might have been very different had it not been for the way in which the threads of the medical organisation had, in the course of the years, been gathered into Mr Lambert's capable hands: a fact to which his fellow-prisoners bore witness by presenting him with an illuminated address bearing more than two thousand signatures.

There was one branch of the medical service, however, which was never reformed, because Berlin proved obstinately stubborn. The surgical cases and those requiring the attention of specialists could be treated either in the camp or at the lazarett. For a long time, they used to be sent to Dr Weiler's Sanatorium; and when that establishment was closed to the camp, the order came that all such cases should be transferred to the War Prisoners' Hospital in Berlin.

That hospital was an old cavalry stable, still reeking of the tan, situated about ten miles from the camp, and the conditions there were known to be unsatisfactory. Every effort was made to get the order rescinded, and to obtain permission for the patients to be sent to the Paulinen Haus zum Rothen Kreuz, Westend—a civilian hospital near the camp to which Dr Weiler had been

accustomed to send patients whom he could not treat in his sanatorium, and of which all men spoke well. The appeal was supported by both the Ruhleben doctors and the Ruhleben commandant; but Berlin remained obdurate, according the desired concession only in cases certified as unfit to be moved. Dr Kapp, happily, gave the certificate in all cases in which he had a colourable excuse for doing so; but cases inevitably occurred in which no such excuse could be found; and the negligent treatment of these cases often had deplorable results. A patient sent to the hospital for a minor operation to one of his fingers was employed, while under treatment, in waiting on other patients in the diphtheria ward. A patient who had broken one of the bones in his wrist was returned to the camp with the wrist set in plaster, but with the fracture, as an X-ray examination showed, still unrepaired. A third patient, whose trouble was adenoids, contracted diphtheria and erysipelas in the hospital, and died. Patients urgently needing immediate treatment sometimes found no doctors in the place. The despatch of medical comforts from Ruhleben, for the use of the patients, was forbidden. The prohibition was maintained in the face of repeated remonstrances, and a consignment which reached the hospital in spite of it was confiscated.

It was a bad business—the worse because the scandalous mismanagement was perfectly well known to the authorities, who made no attempt to improve it, but preferred to use the War Prisoners' Hospital as a place of punishment, to which they could threaten to

send any fractious prisoner who caused trouble. In at least one instance the threat was carried into effect.

This part of our story, therefore, ends, as it began, with the exposure of a scandal which Germany will find it difficult to live down. The record of the military authorities at Berlin in the matter, is bad from first to last, though not quite so bad at last as it was at first. They never initiated reforms, and they never quite ceased to obstruct them, passing only by slow degrees from a policy of active cruelty to one of more or less tolerant indifference. Some of their individual subordinates, as has been shown, fought a good fight against them, and succeeded in doing something to save the good name of their country; but even their good will would have accomplished little if it had not been for the help sent from England, and the energy, enterprise, and power of organisation displayed by certain men within the camp. But for these things the death rate would have been appalling, and the whole story of Ruhleben a tragedy. As it was, tragedy was averted and the death rate was kept low. The work which, in the prison camps in England, was done as a matter of course by the military administration, was there left to the resources and initiative of the prisoners themselves. This chapter has shown in what a spirit they grappled with their task.

CHAPTER XI

EDUCATION AT RUHLEBEN—THE DEBATING SOCIETY—THE CAMP SCHOOL—CAPTAIN HENDRIKSEN'S NAVIGATION CLASSES—THE EXAMINATIONS—QUESTIONS WHICH THE CENSOR FORGOT TO LOOK AT

THE City of Ruhleben was to be not only a centre of trade but also a University City. Education, like sport, of which we will speak presently, sprouted spontaneously there for some time, before organisation overtook it, though it seems to have been the lack of pence, rather than the love of learning, which first set educational machinery in motion. One of the early uses of the boiler-house, of which mention has been made, was as a hoarding for the display of advertisements. The hoarding was no sooner up than impecunious polyglots began to advertise on it for pupils. One specially interesting announcement, addressed by a pro-German to pro-Germans, ran as follows :—

'I give Englisch lesson very chepe. Also haircut or shave.'

What response there was to that particular appeal the present historians do not know; but other signs of study soon faced one at every turn, though the circumstances were scarcely favourable to the pursuit of knowledge. Mr Adams, for instance, who had been a newspaper correspondent at Madrid, started a Spanish

class, though he was unable to obtain a class-room. It eventually broke up, in consequence of the unequal capacities of the pupils—some of them desiring to take the language at a hand-gallop and others at a comfortable jog-trot; but it was, in the meantime, very pleasing to see the picturesque professor, whose pipe was the largest in the camp, and who had the air of a peripatetic philosopher with all the latest improvements, attended by his disciples, pacing up and down the yard in front of Barracks IV. and V.

Another teacher used to give lessons in colloquial German in the course of the route marches on the race-course, ordered by Dr Geiger for the benefit of our health. Again and again one heard him, if one happened to be marching anywhere near him, showing his young friends how to pick up the fragments of a compound German verb, scattered all over a sentence, and piece them together like the joints of a fishing-rod. A third instructor gave Russian lessons in very unconventional style on the grand-stand. His remonstrances with pupils who were not quick enough in the uptake used to run somewhat like this :—

'You blank idiot ! How many more blank times do you want me to tell you the meaning of that blankety word?'

Naturally it soon occurred to some one that these and other scattered professorial endeavours ought to be co-ordinated, and that the flow of the professorial energy stored up in the camp ought to be canalised. The foundation of a School of Languages by Mr

Alexander Richardson was a first effort in that direction; but private initiative was gradually superseded when the captains' committee took the matter up. One of the committees created under Mr Wallace Ellison's scheme of camp organisation was an Education Committee, designed to control not only the classes and lectures, but also a library and a newspaper. Mr Ellison himself became the chairman of this committee; and the Ruhleben Camp School was quickly started. Mr A. C. Ford, who had been teaching at Lausanne, accepted the post of principal; Mr H. W. Truelove became secretary, and Mr Ripton Turner, treasurer; and a prospectus was duly issued.

A hitch occurred; the arrest and removal of Mr Ellison. As captain of the coloured prisoners' barrack, he had made enemies by repressing the unruly elements —mostly men who had lived some time in Germany and grown insolent as a result of the fuss made about them in music-halls and restaurants. The question arose, one day, whether certain small sums of money offered to destitute coloured prisoners by the German military authorities should be accepted. Mr Ellison, pressed to give advice, said that he personally, however destitute he might be, would not care to accept pecuniary help from his jailers. The loyal men took the hint and refused the relief, but some of the others reported a distorted version of Mr Ellison's words, with the result that he was sent to prison in Berlin to await his trial for making remarks offensive to German officers. He was detained there for months without being tried; but the

work which he was thus compelled to relinquish was carried on by his successor, Mr Nelson Hawkins.

The first difficulty of the Education Committee was to discover class-rooms. A request addressed to the inmates of certain boxes to lend their habitations to the students for an hour or two daily was not very cordially received. The weather, at that time, was wet and cold, and the men's boxes were their only places of shelter. Other methods had, therefore, to be adopted. The top of one of the grand-stands was made available for classes; but it was a cold and windy spot, and a proposal to wall it in, and cut the enclosed space up into class-rooms, was found to be impracticable, though the American Embassy sanctioned the expenditure of 600 marks for the purpose. One of the lofts, however, —that of Barrack VI., cleared, after a while, of its inmates because it had been condemned as unfit for human habitation—was turned into class-rooms for the school, some of the race-course betting boxes, which prisoners had, at first, been forbidden to enter, and out of which soldiers had hunted them, were equipped as class-rooms, and when the Y.M.C.A. hut was built, a portion of the space there was assigned to the same purpose. So also were some of the rooms vacated when the German soldiers were withdrawn from the barracks, and the civil administration took over their duties.

In all these developments, it is only just to say, the military administration readily acquiesced—whether because they realised that acquiescence would make the camp easier to govern, or because they really

respected culture as well as kultur. Thanks to their acquiescence, the scholars were soon able to transform Ruhleben into a passable imitation of a University town, with secondary and elementary schools feeding the University, and, later, technical schools supplementing its activities. In the University chairs sat such eminent teachers as Professor Patchett, whom the Germans had captured on his way from one professorial post in Canada to another in Southampton, and Mr Masterman, an Oxford don, whose lectures impressed those who felt capable of pronouncing judgment as not only interesting, but also distinctly 'good for the schools.' At the base of the system were such philanthropists as Mr Henry G. Mahoney—an expert in photography, and, at home, a coadjutor of Sir Jesse Boot—teaching the alphabet and the multiplication table to our coloured fellow-countrymen.

By no means all of these, indeed, required such elementary instruction. One of them was himself a teacher—a professor of Arabic, who was to be seen, all day long, sitting in front of his barrack with a pupil beside him and a copy of the Koran in his hands. Another had qualified himself as a preacher, and used to deliver a sermon every Sunday evening on the grand-stand to a congregation who generally sat with their backs to him, reading novels and newspapers instead of attending to his homily. Still there were some gentlemen of colour who did need to begin at the beginning; and rather a good story is told of one of them who was doing his best, but whose best was not

very good. It happened on the day on which our military authorities, having got their card-index of prisoners into hopeless confusion, by consecrating two cards instead of one to each of a number of men with double-barrelled names, ordered a monster roll-call on the race-course in order to straighten matters out.

They marched us down there, and sorted us alphabetically—all the A's together, all the B's together, etc.: a tedious business, lasting for several hours, and enlivened only by the merriment which some of the names provoked—such names as those of Mr Kitchener who was a tailor, and Mr Edward Grey who, whatever his calling, was certainly not Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But when the names of all the G's had been called, there was an incident. Each man, as he answered to his name, was transferred to a fresh formation; but at last, when the end of the list was reached, it was seen that there still remained a solitary prisoner of colour, grinning most radiantly and intelligently in all directions at once. Mr Beaumont, acting on behalf of the German authorities, whose quaint essays in the pronunciation of English proper names had been making confusion worse confounded, turned and questioned him. This was the dialogue that ensued :—

Mr Beaumont: What are you doing here?

Prisoner of Colour: Please, sah, I'se waitin' to be counted, sah.

Mr Beaumont: What is your name?

Prisoner of Colour: My name, sah, is Martin, sah.

Mr Beaumont: Well, Martin doesn't begin with a G, does it?

Prisoner of Colour: I don't know, sah. I'se only learnt as far as F, sah.

The story is, of course, a digression; but it may serve to introduce the distinction which it is useful to draw between the educational work which was primarily utilitarian and that which was primarily recreative. Some of the utilitarian work, it may be remarked in passing, was utilitarian in a very special sense. It was so, for instance, in the case of Mr Falk who, by announcing a course of instruction in commercial geography, was able to procure, without incurring suspicion, a collection of maps of Germany, with the help of which he and Mr Geoffrey Pyke, after scaling the barbed wire and escaping from the camp, succeeded in finding their way over the Dutch frontier. But that story is another digression, from which one must return to the distinction indicated.

Recreative education was provided by a number of lecturers, who ranged over a rich variety of subjects, and often performed dexterous tricks on a black-board. Travellers lectured on their travels: Mr William Stern of Manchester on Russia, Mr Pogson on China, and Mr Foster Kell on California. Literary lectures were numerous and generally excellent. One of the authors has a particularly pleasant recollection of a most learned lecture on Alfred de Musset, and was much diverted by

the lecturer's disdainful references to his own contributions to the romantic aspects of the subject in *George Sand and her lovers*. Among the musicians lecturing was Mr Bainton, professor of music at Newcastle-on-Tyne, who demonstrated that contemporary music derived less inspiration from Germany than from France, Belgium, and even England, and whose discourse on glees was illustrated by a most competent choir which he himself had trained. Some music which he composed at Ruhleben has since been performed in London.

Perhaps it is in this connection that the Debating Society can most appropriately be mentioned, though there is not a great deal to be said about it. The most palpitating subjects naturally could not be discussed in that arena; but the debaters inquired, heating a cold hall with hot argument, whether representation should be proportional, whether Greek should be compulsory, and whether the cane helped bad boys to rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things. A deputation once waited on a shy middle-aged bachelor and invited him to move a resolution, safely remote from politics, to the effect that it was better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all; but the gentleman in question shrank from any such public exposure of his most sacred feelings.

The moving spirit in the society was Mr Walter Butterworth, J.P., of Manchester; and it was impossible not to admire the grace with which Mr Butterworth, who stood for Parliament at the last general election, took the chair. Indeed, whenever a chair had to be

taken for any good purpose, there was Mr Butterworth ready to take it; and when the military authorities, from time to time, went round the camp making an inventory of the camp furniture, it was erroneously reported that curiosity to ascertain the exact number of chairs which Mr Butterworth had taken was the determining motive of the enumeration.

Meanwhile utilitarian education continued to make steady progress. At first, grants were made to the department by the American Embassy; but in February, 1916, it was decided to endeavour to make the school a self-supporting institution. The modest fee of one mark per month was taken from every pupil, and this small levy—voluntary to begin with, though afterwards compulsory—proved more than sufficient. By Armistice Day the school had not only repaid all its loans, but had a balance standing to its credit.

Of course there was trouble with Baron von Taube; for there was no camp pie into which the Baron did not, at some period, plunge an awkward and disturbing finger. But the trouble was got over after certain resignations had been flung at the Baron's head; and that also was a matter of course. The Baron, as has been said, could generally be managed, if not in one way, then in another; and the educational facilities were usefully extended at the time when Barrack VI. was cleared of its inhabitants.

This was the Jews' barrack—assigned to them in order that they might eat their kosher food in peace,

and perform the acts of ritual which their consciences imposed. Why the Germans wanted to gather them all together is uncertain; but they lost no time in establishing this ghetto; and anti-Semitic non-commissioned officers, not content with calling for volunteers to settle in it, went round some of the other barracks, cross-questioning men whose noses struck them as of a suspicious shape. It was the worst of all the barracks, being partly built of wood, and infested by rats and other vermin. The non-commissioned officer in charge of it had the manners of a member of the Black Hundred bent on a pogrom; but the education committee were glad to have the use of the building, and soon succeeded in making it tolerably habitable.

One condition was laid upon them—that they should wire off the compound surrounding the barrack, see that it was locked at night, and guarantee that no one could obtain access to it after closing time. The object of the precaution was to prevent escapes; and it may have been necessary, as the barrack was very close to the outside wire fences. At all events the committee undertook it, purchasing the wire and paying the labour out of the funds placed at their disposal, with the result that both the education department and the arts and science union, under the leadership of Dr Higgins, were at last fairly adequately accommodated.

Probably it was in languages that the school was strongest; probably there were more competent teachers of a larger number of languages at Ruhleben than there have ever been at either Oxford or Cambridge. The

tongues in which instruction could be got included English, Latin, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek (modern as well as ancient), Russian, Polish, Danish, Yiddish, Serbian, Hebrew, and Arabic; and there were serious students of almost all of them.

German, in spite of the obvious facilities, was neglected. Most men, indeed, picked up rather more than a smattering of it by wrestling with the German newspapers; but the disposition of scholars was to turn their backs on it, as a practical demonstration of the contempt which they had acquired for Kultur. It was a sore point with some of the more cultivated and sympathetic of the German officers. At one prisoner—a distinguished Italian scholar, exchanged some time in 1917—an officer who was saying a friendly good-bye to him fired this parting shot: 'Your behaviour, sir, has always been that of a gentleman; but we have been unable to help noticing, to our great disappointment, that, during the whole of your stay among us, you have consistently sneered at our art and refused to make any attempt to learn our language.'

The sneers were mostly inferential. Whatever art was under discussion in the class-rooms, men preferred, as a rule, to discuss it without reference to any German contribution thereto. The language was ignored by the scholars as the clumsy instrument of a literature lacking inspiration, and by the utilitarians as the tongue of a people with whom they desired no dealings. The feeling gained ground, as time passed, that the breach which the war had made between the peoples

would take a long time to heal, and that the linguistic machinery for intercourse between them might just as well be allowed to rust. As one man put it :—

'When once I am out of this place, I shall have nothing to say to any German; and if any German has anything to say to me, he must say it in English or bring an interpreter to say it for him.'

The most popular language was naturally French. After French, the favourites were Spanish [1] and Italian —the former preferred by the utilitarians, and the latter by the scholars, who found a most competent instructor in Mr M. E. Prichard, under whose direction they founded both an Italian debating society and two Italian periodicals. The Russian [2] classes were also well attended and the students had their reward when they got home. A number of them, in spite of their long enforced leisure, found more lucrative posts on their return to England than those which they had lost in consequence of their internment.

Not less useful—and, perhaps, more remarkable—was the work accomplished by Captain Hendriksen, a master mariner. He was resolved that the young ships' officers and apprentices in the camp should not be obliged to waste their time; and, to that end, he organised navigation classes, thus enabling them to pursue their studies. His classes were, after negotiation and correspondence, recognised by the Board of Trade;

[1] Mr Riddle, Anglo-Spanish, and born in Spain, took the lead in the teaching of that language.

[2] Mr Lareng, Barrack IX., and Mr McPherson of Barrack VIII., were competent Russian teachers.

and it was promised that attendance at his lectures should be counted to his pupils' credit in computing the date at which they should be eligible to present themselves for examination. The promise was fulfilled, and the proportion of passes achieved by Captain Hendriksen's pupils was one of which any tutor might be proud.

As the result of other negotiations, it was actually arranged that London matriculation examinations should be held in the camp itself; and here also the proportion of passes was higher than in most English schools. The questions papers were kept under seal by the German censor until the morning of the examination, and the answers were also handed to him and forwarded by him to England. Unfortunately he did not always examine the questions, which he had undertaken to censor, with the attention which they merited; and as the English examiners had set the papers without giving a thought to the fact that copies were to be sent to the enemy's country, some of the questions were but imperfectly adapted to the circumstances in which they had to be answered.

One of the questions, for example, called for a comparison of the British and German fleets; and it will readily be believed that the candidates spread themselves in replying—speaking freely of the chivalry of the seas, boasting of the tightness of the blockade, ridiculing the 'victory' which had failed to open the German ports, and not forgetting the stories of the *Lusitania* and the *Belgian Prince*. Naturally those

answers did not get to England, but the censor had the tact and sense to recognise that the fault was mainly his, so that the incident had none of the untoward consequences which it might have entailed had it occurred earlier in the history of the camp, before the privileged position of Ruhleben as a British colony had been recognised.

In conclusion, a word must be said about the laboratories and the schools for handicrafts, started at the end of 1916.

The chemical laboratory was under the direction of Dr Blagden; the others were under Dr Lechmere and Dr Pease. Among other things, men experimented in that German dye industry which it is the object of our own dyers to capture. Their resources probably did not enable them to penetrate very deeply into its mysteries; but it is a fact that some of the students have obtained posts in English firms on the strength of their researches.

In the handicrafts department, bookbinding was taught by Mr Milner, silver work by Mr Stickling, leather work by Mr Wilmott; while there was also a Woollen and Worsted Society started by some spinners and weavers who happened to be in the camp. The difficulty of all the handicraftsmen was the dearth of raw material. This narrowed their opportunities, but also stimulated their ingenuity, as it did that of the blockaded Germans themselves. For the silver work, hoarded coins were used; while books were bound in the skins of rats, killed within the precincts of the

camp—with what excellent results the Ruhleben Exhibition at the Central Hall, Westminster, demonstrated.

The prize for ingenuity should, perhaps, be awarded to the Woollen and Worsted Society. Not only did they start classes in which all the arts of spinning, weaving, and dyeing were taught; but one of them actually, while in internment, invented a new carpet loom, of which a model was erected, and on which several small carpets were made. Wool, at that time, was practically unobtainable in Germany; but the weavers ransacked the dust-bins, pulled out any old socks or sweaters that had been thrown away by their owners, unravelled the wool, washed it, dyed it, and made it up.

Surprisingly good articles were manufactured by this means; and there can be little doubt that, if a proper machine could have been set up, and a sufficiency of proper raw material procured, the profit on the sale of the goods, supposing trading to have been possible, would have been almost enough to pay the whole expenses of the camp.

CHAPTER XII

RECREATION—CLUBS—THE SUMMER HOUSE—THE CORNER HOUSE —THE SMUGGLING OF WHISKY—THE SMUGGLING OF ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS—THE W. H. SMITH OF RUHLEBEN—ATTITUDE OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES

MATERIAL needs and intellectual needs having been provided for, it was equally necessary to organise recreation and entertainment. Tastes being various, the field to be covered was wide; and the activities which fall under this head include not only games and theatrical performances, but also the foundation of social clubs. It may be more convenient to speak first of the clubs because there is least to be said about them.

The chief of these was the so-called Summer House —limited to a membership of one hundred. There was an exclusiveness about this Summer House which sometimes provoked stern, unbending democrats to make acrimonious remarks; but the dust of that old controversy need not now be stirred, though the American Ambassador took a hand in it, and sniffed at the Society in some of his reports printed as White Papers. Clubable men always form clubs wherever they may be; and there are always men who would rather sit in a club, sipping refreshments and chatting with

congenial companions, than either take part in a cricket match or look on at it.

The Summer House premises consisted of a shed and an allotment. The allotment was turned into a garden; the shed was reconstructed and cut up into rooms. Small tables, cheap and comfortable chairs, and a few books of reference, including the inevitable Whittaker, were bought; a few newspapers—German newspapers, of course, as no others were really allowed—were subscribed for. Men gossiped there, wrote letters, and played cards or chess. A steward, wearing a white apron, served coffee and lemonade. Everything was done, as far as might be, on the lines of a London club. The members could almost forget, on summer afternoons, that they were prisoners of war; and when a pro-German American journalist, who was to write up the camp, paid a professional visit to the club and ventured to air his pro-Germanism, he was asked whether he would prefer to walk out through the door or be pitched out through the window. He preferred the door; and a report of the incident which reached England brought about his expulsion from a club to which he belonged in London.

Another club, less exclusive, if that is the applicable word, was known as the Corner House. It was not as quiet as the Summer House, but organised 'symposia' and smoking concerts. A good many other sheds, elsewhere in the camp, were hired for similar purposes by other groups of men, and more or less elegantly fitted up. Members often used their facilities for the purpose

of giving birthday parties; and the air of easy superiority to circumstances which they and their guests displayed made some of the German soldiers, who lived less comfortably, green with envy.

'Sitting about there like so many Counts, as if the place belonged to them and we were the waiters,' was one surly fellow's comment, in the days before surliness had been overcome; and he and some kindred spirits once ran amok among the deck-chairs at the dead of night, and pitched them into one of the ditches dug by the sanitary engineers.

But not with impunity. The men who looked like Counts had no idea of submitting meekly to the insolence of German privates. Instead of tamely pulling their chairs out of the trench, they left them there, fetched the Baron, showed him what had been done, and inquired whether the proceedings met with his approval. Caught in one of his better moods, in which he saw himself as a gentleman who knew what was due to gentlemen, the Baron replied that they did not; and presently the offending soldier, having restored the chairs to their proper place, appeared humbly before the captain of the affronted barrack, tendering apologies, and begging that those whom he had wronged would intercede for him, and save him from punishment.

The chief comfort usual in clubs which the Ruhleben clubs at first lacked was alcohol; but some time in 1916, the sale of wine was permitted in the camp. Amelunxen, being in the trade, had an interest in putting the business

through; and there was no disposition among his customers to scrutinise his motives too closely. Spirits, however, were always taboo and only to be obtained, with the help of smugglers, by means of bribery and corruption. By such means they could generally be obtained, at prices not much higher than one has to pay nowadays in London; and competition for employment as smugglers became very keen among the German soldiers as time progressed. At the beginning most of them could be persuaded to do most things for money; towards the end almost any of them would do almost anything for a pot of dripping.

One of the most interesting of the smugglers was Corporal Pyrro, a Social Democrat; but he seemed to have taken to the business less for love of lucre than for love of his fellow-men. Certainly his behaviour was always that of a man who regarded all men as his brothers, and held that prisoners had a particular claim on his benevolence.

The story may be said to have begun when Pyrro was sentenced to seventy-two hours' solitary confinement, for 'treating prisoners as if they were his personal friends.' He did his time and bravely resumed his friendships when he came out. The men in his barrack, wishing to show their appreciation, made a neat little garden, about four feet square, outside his bed-room window; and Pyrro, not to be outdone, went round the dormitory one night with a huge bag of sweets, and insisted that every man should accept two honey-drops. It was really almost a tragedy when he was caught

smuggling, and received his marching orders; but he did not retire without firing a parting shot. Walking into the Casino restaurant, when a number of his patrons were at their dinner, he saluted with a flourish and called a loud farewell: *'Auf wiedersehen, meine Herrschaften!'*

And *meine Herrschaften*, be it observed, means a good deal more than 'gentlemen,' and not much less than 'your lordships.'

This Casino, it should be added, was notoriously a smuggling centre; naturally because, the caterer for the prisoners' restaurant being also the caterer for the officers' mess, goods nominally purchased for the one could easily be disposed of, *sub rosa*, to the other. At all events, such substitutions did occur rather frequently, and though the majority of the purchasers always kept within the bounds of moderation, it was not an absolutely unknown thing for those who indulged to become merry. Nor did any change in the Casino management result in the cessation of the traffic.

Count Schwerin, indeed, was the only officer in the camp who seriously and consistently tried to stop it. He was not himself a teetotaller; but he did try to take the lofty tone of a temperance reformer where other people's refreshments were concerned. Driving into the camp one day in his carriage, he pulled up, harangued a group of officers and captains on the evils of alcoholism, and announced that any soldier caught smuggling spirits into the camp would be punished with the utmost

rigour of military law. Little did he guess that a dozen bottles of brandy, smuggled by his own coachman, were stowed away underneath the seat on which he sat while delivering that impressive address.

Nor were spirits the only articles which smugglers purveyed in the camp. They also drove a roaring trade in English and French newspapers.

Baron von Mutzenbecher, as has already been related, wondered how these were so regularly circulated; and it was a subject on which many curious stories were current among the prisoners. One heard of sardine tins which, when opened, were found to contain newspapers instead of sardines, and of cakes into which newspapers had been baked together with the other ingredients. It was also said that, at the point at which a canal towing-path ran close to the camp, a bargee might sometimes be seen getting out of a barge, and affixing a newspaper to the end of a strip of wire by means of which it was hauled into the camp like a hooked fish. It is possible that all these things happened; but the discovery of them by the authorities would have left the main source of supply untapped.

The simple fact was that, at a time when German papers were excluded from England, English papers were openly on sale in Berlin, and that German soldiers, anxious to supplement their pay, yielded to the temptation to buy them in the cheapest and sell them in the dearest market. At first, when the trade was regarded as a dangerous one, the price was high, as much as forty marks being charged for a copy of the *Times*, the *Daily*

Mail, or the *Daily Telegraph*. Impunity and competition, however, soon reduced the charges. They fell to ten, to five, and even to three marks. The distribution of the copies thus procured was undertaken by a mysterious gentleman known to the camp as 'the W. H. Smith of Ruhleben.' They were 'lent to read,' as in the days of old in England, at a charge of one shilling per hour on the first day, sixpence per hour on the second day, and still smaller sums on the succeeding days.

For a time the proceedings of this news agency were as mysterious as those of the Carbonari of Portugal. Subscribers had to conduct their negotiations with intermediaries, who refused to disclose the names of their principals. Their subscriptions were collected and their papers delivered by perfect strangers, and fetched by other strangers after the hour had elapsed. It was a point of honour to ask no questions. Afterwards, however, as the supply of papers increased, the pretence of mystery was to some extent abandoned. In those days, men formed reading clubs, and one might sometimes see six or eight men assembled in a box, dividing a paper among them, each of them poring over a single sheet. The papers sometimes got into the camp within three days of their publication, and they were never more than fourteen days late. The whole business was another of the triumphs of British organisation, though the captains' committee had nothing to do with it.

From time to time the authorities made spasmodic

attempts to probe the secret. On more than one occasion men caught with English papers in their hands were haled before Baron von Taube; but the organ in their possession always turned out to be the *Continental Times*, which some simple-minded soldiers employed on detective work had mistaken for the genuine article from Printing House Square. It was also rumoured—and the rumour has found its way into print—that the soldiers once 'searched the canteen girls with the idea that, perhaps, newspapers might have got mixed up with their petticoats'; but that search, if, indeed, it took place, was fruitless and the report was probably untrue.

Yet the prisoners, though secretive as to their methods, did not deny, when challenged, that they were doing the thing of which the authorities suspected them, and were proud of their success in evading discovery. One of them once, in the course of a conversation with Baron von Taube, went out of his way to say so. The Baron had engaged him in a military argument, and asked him, in the course of it, how certain facts had come to his knowledge.

'Well, you see,' replied the prisoner, 'I read the English papers. Never mind how I get them—I know I am not allowed to get them, but I *do* get them. You can give me seventy-two hours for it, if you like; but, in the meantime, I propose to quote them for the purposes of this discussion; and I assure you——'

And the Baron took no hostile action, but merely exclaimed :—



Casino and Guard House.



Parcels Arriving.

'*Ach lieber Gott!* It is now past nine o'clock, and I have not yet eaten my supper.'

Which incident shows that the Baron did, on the whole, desire to behave like a gentleman, in spite of his explosive fits of passion.

CHAPTER XIII

SPORT—PERMISSION OBTAINED TO USE THE RACECOURSE—THE RECREATION COMMITTEE—THE FIRST ATHLETIC MEETING —THE BANK HOLIDAY REVEL

GAMES, like everything else, were started at Ruhleben in the face of difficulties. Except for the weekly route marches, ordered by Dr Geiger, access to the race-course was for several months strictly forbidden. The camp authorities were quite willing to admit us to it, but the Berlin authorities imposed their veto.

It was mainly a question of money. The owners of the place wanted additional rent for the use of the race-course, and the German Government grudged the payment. Better, they seem to have argued, that British prisoners should be uncomfortable, than that a single mark should be unnecessarily spent on them. It was an attitude quite in keeping with their determination on no account to spend more than sixty-six pfennigs per man per day on our food.

The only ground at that time available for games consisted of the sandy (or muddy) open spaces between the stables. There were not many of these; and the largest of them measured only 60 by 30 yards. Even so, however, games were everywhere being played: not only such obvious games as cricket, football, rounders, and golf, but also such comparatively unlikely games as prisoner's base, tip-cat, and high-cockalorum.

Most of the games, no doubt, were half-hearted, amateurish affairs; but there were some very hotly contested rounders and football matches, which both German officers and German soldiers used to watch with a curiosity which developed into excitement.

Then, on March 20, 1915, came the inspection of the camp by General von Kessel. As Commandant of the Mark of Brandenburg, he was the Kaiser's right-hand man, and had only to breathe a word to override any other man's decision.

'During the course of his inspection,' says Mr Powell, 'Mr Beaumont and I were presented to him as the heads of the civil administration. Count Schwerin, in introducing us, commended the work which we had done in that capacity; and Von Kessel then inquired, in the brusque tone of a jail governor going his rounds, whether we had any complaints to make or any requests to prefer. We were standing, at the time, quite close to the wire barrier which separated us from the racing track. I pointed to it, and said that our crying need was for the use of that space as a playing-field.

' "Very well; you shall have it," said Von Kessel; and the matter seemed to be settled.

' "Seemed," I say, for there was still to be a good deal of wriggling before the promise thus given was fulfilled. Unexpected obstacles cropped up, and the pledge was found to be hedged about by unexpected conditions. Not the whole of the ground but only one half of it was to be placed at our disposal, lest our shouts should disturb the workers in the military

administrative offices; and for the use of that half we must pay rent to the proprietors. This was agreed to do; and I went to Berlin, interviewed the proprietors, and struck a bargain with them—£40 for six months' use of the field. The agreement, of course, had afterwards to be renewed; but at that date we were still expecting an early termination, if not of the war, at least of our internment."

After that, the Recreation Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr J. H. Thorpe, was able to get to work in earnest, and, at once, with the able assistance of Messrs J. Swift and Fred Pentland, marked off a football pitch, got wood and made goal-posts, procured footballs from Berlin, and arranged our first football match, at which Baron von Taube, in full uniform, and with the inevitable cigar in his mouth, consented to kick off. This committee, however, constituted at a time when the facilities for recreation were limited, was superseded, in May, by a new Sports Control Committee, representing a large variety of sporting interests, and composed as follows :—

Mr G. H. Fisher ..	Chairman.
Mr J. Swift	Vice-chairman.
Mr G. Dix	Physical Drill.
Mr Jephson	Physical Drill.
Mr J. O'Hara Murray ..	Lawn Tennis.
Mr F. B. Pentland ..	Association Football.
Mr Moresby White ..	Rugby Football.
Mr T. Sullivan	Athletics.
Mr R. Revill	Secretary.

Our athletic standards, like our educational standards, were high, not in one department of sport only, but in almost all departments. Our football team, including some old internationals, could have competed for the cup tie without looking ridiculous. We could have put a very creditable eight on the river at Henley, if only we could have got there, stroked by either an old Cambridge blue, or an ex-champion sculler. Some of our cricketers had played for the universities and counties. Our list of golfers included many professionals; while our leading representatives on the racing track—whose performances shall be the first to be taken in detail—were Mr Smyllie, who had won prizes at Trinity College, Dublin, Mr Macintosh, the brother of the well-known light blue, who had made his *début* at the Berne Exhibition, and Mr Edwards, whose previous record our newspaper, *In Ruhleben Camp*, thus summarised :—

'As a member of the *Verein fur Volkssport-Teutonia*, he ran in the Olympic trials held in June, 1914, at Berlin, and distinguished himself by achieving a wonderful second in the 200 metres, the winner, Raw, setting up a world's record on that occasion by doing the distance in 21 6-10 seconds, Edwards coming in only a second later. At the International Sports, held at Berlin in July of the same year, he obtained again second place, with Raw as winner, in the 100 metres. The time was 10 9-10 seconds. Later on, he ran third in the 100 metres to Raw and Patterson, and, on

another occasion, ran second to Raw over the same distance, the time being 10 9-10 seconds. At Buda-Pesth, he again contested the 200 metres with Patterson, and this time won in 22 seconds. Taking all this into consideration, one can have no hesitation whatever in putting Edwards down as an even-timer, and, remembering that he is only seventeen years of age and has yet to set, one may yet be able to boast of including a record holder.'

Our first Athletic Meeting took place the previous week, with the finals on Empire Day, 1915; and a full report of the events was given by *In Ruhleben Camp*. The times, if not absolutely good, were very good relatively to the conditions—the track being of sand, and the men having had no adequate opportunities of training. Mr Edwards won the 100 yards in 11 2-5 seconds, the 75 yards in 8 4-5 seconds, and the quarter of a mile in 56½ seconds. The half-mile was won by Mr R. B. Brown in 2 minutes 16 seconds, and the mile by Mr P. Wright in 4 minutes 59 seconds. The tug-of-war resolved itself into a contest between the sailors of Barrack IV. and the public schoolmen of Barrack X. The sailors won, but it took them all they knew to do so. For putting the weight, the favourite was Mr Alison, the dentist, who had kept his muscles up to the mark by extracting teeth *sub rosa* in the camp; but the victory fell to a dark horse, Mr Beaumont, vice-captain of the camp, whose past included a record of athletic distinction at Cambridge.

Then, in the evening, Baroness von Taube presented the prizes with charm and graciousness, falling very naturally into English ways.

All was good humour that day, and all was again good humour on the August Bank Holiday. Indeed all was generally good humour on the sports side of the barbed wire. Baron von Taube, indeed, with that uncertain temper of his, sometimes held over our heads the threat that, if any more men escaped, or if this, that, or the other thing, which he did not like, ever happened again, the recreation ground would be closed; but experience continued to show that his bark was very much worse than his bite, that the thunder was seldom followed by much lightning, and that outbursts of the kind could safely be ignored as 'only pretty Fanny's way.' On the whole, the Baron liked us, and wanted to know us better, and shrank from doing anything which would cause us to cease to cheer him; and the first Monday in August was one of the occasions on which he and the other officers in the camp thoroughly enjoyed their initiation into British usages.

For that afternoon we organised a World's Fair,—a real Hampstead Heath revel. Claims were pegged out, and side shows were set up. A Pierrot Company performed; and men put on the oddest fancy dresses —Mr Mahoney, if memory serves, being particularly effective as a mad hatter. One could shy sticks at Aunt Sallys, and have one's fortune told, and throw rings for prizes, and gamble at little roulette

tables. The camp police were there to see that no one exceeded the bounds of legitimate merriment; and the German officers and their wives, and, in some cases, their sweethearts, came out and mingled with the throng, making no attempt to conceal the child-like pleasure which they felt. It was particularly gratifying to see little Dr Geiger, roaming about the course, hand in hand with a huge and affectionate lady, several times his size. That was indeed a Hampstead Heath touch which might fairly have been described as 'worth all the money.'

The licence, too, accorded to the gamblers at the roulette tables was a curious example of German inconsistency. At first gambling had been strictly forbidden in the camp. Not only was it against the rules to gamble; it was even an offence to possess a pack of cards; and many packs of cards were confiscated though receipts were given for them. It was a subject on which, in the early days, the civil administration had many arguments with the military authorities, whose original idea seems to have been to combine brutal oppression with a high moral tone, so that Kultur might have something to boast about when Germany owned the earth. The captains pointed out to them that harmless gambling was a British habit, that it had not, so far, undermined the solidity and seriousness of the British character, and that, if the appliances were taken away, it would infallibly continue without appliances.

It certainly did continue, mainly in the form of

bookmaking on both athletic and political events—large sums of money changing hands when, for instance, Italy entered the war; and the authorities, who at first were adamant, were eventually moved. The cards were restored to their rightful owners; and bridge parties were given in many horse-boxes. The rule against playing for money remained in force; but it was obviously impossible to prove any breach of it, unless money was actually spread on the table. So the regulation was allowed to lapse; and the Latin tag held the field: *Naturam expellas furca, etc.*

The prohibition of roulette, however, survived the prohibition of card-playing; and it certainly was curious to see men, not only permitted, but even encouraged, 'for this occasion only,' to indulge in practices for which, on any other occasion, they might have been punished with twenty-four hours in the cells. It was still more curious (though, of course, it was in the tradition of the Roman Saturnalia) to see their jailers joining with them in the amusement. But that was what happened; and Mr Powell was the recipient of an interesting confidence from the Baron.

'In the course of the evening,' he relates, 'the Baron complained to me of the conduct, not of the prisoners, but of the Baroness. She had spent the whole afternoon, he said, going from roulette table to roulette table, and losing money at each of them in turn. She had borrowed all the money he had in his pocket, and had lost it. She had sent him back to

his quarters for more money, and had lost that too. If that sort of thing went on much longer, he would be a ruined man.'

Decidedly we were getting on when the camp officer could make such a confession to the head of the civil administration. But that, after all, is a side issue; and it is time to revert to the more serious history of the camp sports.

CHAPTER XIV

FOOTBALL—SOCCER—RUGGER—CRICKET—LAWN TENNIS—GOLF—VALUE OF SPORT AS AN ANTIDOTE TO BARBED WIRE DISEASE

Of all our games, football was probably the one which aroused the liveliest interest. Our football season began earlier in the winter, and lasted longer into the summer, than is usual in England; and barrack competed against barrack as eagerly as College against College at a University, or House against House at a public school. Steve Bloomer, the old international, was a tower of strength; and his great reputation was not confined to the British Isles. Holland also had heard of him; and Holland, at that time, was swept by an enthusiasm which Dutch humorists spoke of as 'the English sickness.' When, therefore, the word was passed round that Steve Bloomer was included in a batch of civilian prisoners arriving to be interned, by arrangement, in Dutch territory, the Dutch turned out in their tens of thousands to meet his train, and gave him such a reception as Disraeli got when he came back from Berlin to London, bringing Peace with Honour.

Under Steve Bloomer's competent guidance, Barrack I. won the championship in the first year, though Barrack X., captained by Fred Pentland, and composed mainly of old public school players, put up a

stout fight for it. Other leading players, many of them professionals, were J. Brearley, F. Hartley, F. Dutton, S. Wolstenholm, and J. Cameron; and other matches, besides those between the barracks, were those between England and Scotland, and the Seamen and the Longshoremen. The interest taken in the game never languished in spite of the long duration of the internment; and *In Ruhleben Camp* had its up-to-date sporting reporter, who rushed round interviewing the leading players. For instance :—

'When asked for an opinion on the Camp Football, Mr Bloomer said :—

' " I have no hesitation in saying that, had we to meet the best teams on this side or even a league reserve team, we might pick a side that would put up a very tight game. What would the team be, you say? Well, I think I should choose it from the following players : Rogan, Gillespie, Still, Stewart, Dugdale, Owens, Mew, Henson, Dixon, Ellis, Warner, Palin, Perry, Richards, Crossland, Sullivan, Roupell, Mills, Facer, Bodin, Millar, Falk, Owen, Burnhill, Garden, Lithgow, Quinn, Collinson.'

And then followed the judgment of Mr E. Dutton, formerly of the Newcastle United :—

'Well, on the whole, the football played was not at all bad. I must say I was disappointed that the Public Schools and 'Varsities did not make a better

show on the soccer field, but the one or two representatives they did send us played a very decent game. Judged by home amateur standards, the play was certainly of a high order, though, mind you, I am talking now of the tail-end of the season. I should certainly put up Barrack I., Barrack IV., and Barrack X. teams to beat the best people over here, but the other elevens, if up against the best products of this country, would, I am sure, have to go all out, and even then we should be doubtful of the result.'

So spoke those to whom football is not merely a game, but an ideal; and the seriousness with which football was taken at Ruhleben was further attested by the publication of a neat little volume entitled *Handbook of the Ruhleben Football Association*, bearing the imprint of the Ruhleben Printing and Publishing Department, for which collectors will probably pay high prices in future years. It contains, among other things, rules, hints to players, biographies of leading players, and a balance-sheet showing an income of a little over £35. It was compiled in collaboration by Mr Pentland and Mr John Cameron, a popular member of Barrack X., formerly manager of the Tottenham Hotspur Club.

Rugby football was played with equal enthusiasm, though less as if it were the players' main business and sole interest in life. It had not, like the association game, the support of a number of professionals, brought to Germany to coach German teams; but

there were many brilliant amateurs, who formed five different clubs, and arranged several matches, though no 'league' matches. The moving spirits were Mr Moresby White, a Rhodes scholar from South Africa, and Mr R. C. Brown, both of Barrack XI., and both interned at a very early date.

As soon as the football season had ended, the cricket season began. The game was played with equal ardour, though it was not, at first, reported with equal thoroughness—the editor of *In Ruhleben Camp* confessing in print that he was not a cricketer. The public school men held their own in it, the barrack in which they constituted a conclusive majority not only winning the championship but also challenging and beating the whole of the rest of the camp. This last match lasted four days, and was anybody's game until the last hour's play, when a rot set in, wickets fell rapidly, and Barrack X. was left victorious by 164 runs. 'The honours of the match,' says the reporter, 'rest with L. G. Crossland, who must be heartily congratulated on his two magnificent innings of 129 in the first innings and 202 in the second. His batting throughout was of a most spirited character, and if not entirely faultless, was still a magnificent piece of play.'

The final review of the season, after commending 'the untiring energy of Joe Andrews in the capacity of head groundsman,' proceeds to appreciate the qualities of the winning team; and that passage of the review may be quoted :—

'As forecasted at the outset, the championship was won by Barrack X., who were obviously favoured with more talent than any other barrack, and on form were most unfortunate in failing to retain an unbeaten record. Their success was in a large measure due to their possessing such an excellent leader and cricketer in J. C. Masterman, who is certainly the best all-round man in the camp. Always a clever and steady bowler, his form with the bat, although most convincing in the earlier part of the season, suffered at the finish through over indulgence in tennis. He possesses two sterling qualities, good sportsmanship and modesty, which former is shared by every member of the team. Although each of them is worthy of mention, the limited space at our command compels us to touch only lightly on the merits and demerits of the outstanding players. McGill proved to be the mainstay of the attack, ably supported by Gilbert, who as a batsman did not fulfil the promise shown in the earlier games. Harrison, though possessing a very unattractive style, was a tower of strength in the batting line. Steadman is a fine forcing batsman, who made a pile of runs, but would have done better had he at times shown more patience and eliminated the " blind swipe." Roupell, although very disappointing at the start, showed greatly improved form towards the close, but even then failed to remedy a very faulty " mashie shot " on the leg side, to which he fell a victim on many occasions. Belmont, who was well worth his place for fielding alone, saved his

side in many matches from the danger of a batting collapse. Crossland, possibly the best wicket-keeper in the league, might do well to remember that a theatrical pose is not always of material value in suppressing " Mr Extras." '

The review, save for a paragraph of apology for venturing to offer criticism, concludes thus :—

'We feel that we could not close in a more suitable fashion than by regarding the cricketers as a body and stating what, in our humble opinion, would form the strongest representative team from the camp. We would name the following fifteen : Masterman, McGill, Harrison, Crossland, Fachiri, Ponsonby, Gudgeon, Bardsley, Stewart, Baker, Barber, Raper, Bloomer, Haines (2), Johnson : thus supplying our readers with an ample variety for the selection of a camp eleven.'

Minor games played concurrently with the major games were hockey, lawn tennis, and golf. The first named was started under the direction of Mr J. C. Masterman, who excelled in so many branches of sport, as well as so many branches of learning, that he might fairly be denominated the Admirable Crichton, or the C. B. Fry of the camp. The first secretary of the lawn tennis club, to which each member paid a twenty-mark fee to cover the initial outlay for nets, etc., was Mr Fred Manning; and a list of prominent players would include Messrs Logie, Masterman, Gilbert,

O'Hara Murray, Maxwell, Harrison, Macintosh, and Roupell. The game was one which the junior German officers watched with great enthusiasm; and they sometimes pressed players to continue after the bell had rung for the vacation of the playing fields.

As for golf—a diversion described by the late Professor Bywater as 'pushing balls into little holes with implements ill adapted to the purpose'—the history of the game at Ruhleben furnishes decisive proof of the growing fascination which it exercises over the human mind.

There were no proper links there—the difference between a racing track and a golf links being obvious to the untrained eye of the most superficial observer. But your true enthusiast insists upon golf whether links are available or not. Sooner than not play golf at all, he would play it on the Ripley Road or in a crockery shop. So the Ruhleben enthusiasts, having already smashed many windows by golfing in the barrack yards with stables for bunkers, clamoured for their share of our enlarged opportunities, and made, through Mr G. F. Fisher, on April 27, 1915, an application to be allowed to practise for an hour each morning from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., before the grounds were thrown open to the rest of the camp. The military authorities agreed, on the understanding that the civil administration would supply a police force to make sure that none but golfers passed through the gate at that time.

Such were the small beginnings; but the game soon

became widely popular, and then the facilities were extended. At the end of our stay, though there were only about 2500 of us left, the members of our Golf Club numbered about 800; and they were allowed to monopolise the ground for two hours every morning, for two hours every evening, and also for a full half day every week, on any wet day, and for a solid week or so every three months, when they were playing off their tournaments. The view of some of the enthusiasts that, if more than a foursome were on the field at one time, it was overcrowded, got little support from the remainder of the community.

It was only a five-hole course, measuring 250 yards by 100 yards, laid out on a sandy soil, with a few tufts of grass and heather; but much amusement was found on it, and beginners were able to get good lessons from the professionals: Messrs Butchart, Warburton, Holt, Callaway, Brown, Andrews, and Richardson. Some of the beginners became quite good players in the course of their four years' practice; and it happened among other surprises, that the first prize in one of the tournaments was carried off by two master mariners who had never touched a golf club in their lives before their internment. Golf balls, of course, owing to the rubber shortage, were not to be procured in Germany; but these were imported from England, while several of the professionals manufactured clubs in the camp.

One need not pursue the record further, for sporting chronicles are apt to make dull reading; but upon the general effect of the games upon the life of the camp, it

is worth while to dwell, for it would be difficult, if not impossible, to exaggerate the benefit derived from them. There were, at first, a few among us who, pre-occupied with graver interests, declared that they had 'no use for sport' at a time when the fate of nations was hanging in the balance; but the wiser remembered how, when the fate of the United States was hanging in the balance, Abraham Lincoln went to the theatre, saying that if he did not do so, he should 'bust.' Our need for recreation—and therefore for sport—resembled his, and arose out of very similar causes.

The trouble of internment does not depend solely upon material conditions, important though these are; for man does not live by bread alone, though he may be very critical of the quality of his bread. He may do so for a week—for a month—for two or three months; but then he has to resist—and sometimes fails to resist—certain indefinable but grave and cumulative mental and moral influences, which are always at work, like the constant dripping of water on a rock. They affect different men differently; but hardly any man is unaffected by them. Some men are made nervous by them; others quarrelsome. Loss of memory, as we discovered, is another frequent symptom; while, in extreme cases, speech wanders, and becomes incoherent, and a complete nervous breakdown follows: a condition now known to medicine as barbed wire disease.

Sport was the antidote to that danger—or, at all

events, one of the antidotes, and one of the most widely helpful. Some of us could have held out longer than the rest on our own and each other's mental and spiritual resources—our provision, as it were, for the spiritual siege which we were standing; and all threw what they could into the common stock—one man contributing an anecdote, another a system of philosophy, a third one of those poetical 'jewels five words long,' on which, if one is in the mood, one can sometimes live happily for a whole afternoon; but the sports valuably supplemented the resources even of the most resourceful. They supplied an immediate in place of a remote interest; they furnished excitements which could be satisfied before one got tired of them; they kept alert minds which would otherwise have been languid; and so they helped men on from day to day.

That, so far as one can analyse it, seems to have been the psychology of the matter; the actual facts were simple and satisfactory. Alike in lofts and in boxes, a new cheerfulness broke out. There was always something to talk about; some feat to applaud; some failure to deplore; some chance about which to speculate; something—not to put too fine a point on it—to bet about. There were bookmakers among us who encouraged that human weakness. Some men must have lost to them, money which they had received from the American Embassy, to spend on food and clothes. But that mattered less than some moral experts would suppose. The alternating thrills of

hope and fear introduce variety into monotonous lives; and it is better for the human mind even to make much ado about nothing than to be vacant.

So the games were a great thing for us all, and not only for those who were still of an age to find in games their principal interest in life. They contributed to our health as well as to our happiness: not only to our physical, but also to our spiritual health. Those who joined in them profited immensely, whether they excelled or not; and those who organised them with the thoroughness and solemnity of the committees which direct the affairs of the M.C.C. or the Olympic Games, deserve to be ranked among the benefactors not only of the camp, but of their kind.

CHAPTER XV

TRANSFORMATION OF THE HALL UNDER THE GRAND-STAND—DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL SOCIETIES—PLAYS—CONCERTS—THE RUHLEBEN SONG—THE TRAFALGAR DAY CELEBRATION IN 1918

In place of our original Recreation Committee, we presently constituted two separate committees: one for Sports and the other for Entertainments. After some friction, of which it would be superfluous at this time of day to recall the details, it was arranged that four representatives of the various Dramatic and Musical Societies which had been formed should be elected to membership of the committee; and the representatives chosen were:—

Ruhleben Dramatic Society: Sir Timothy Eden.
French and German Dramatic Societies: Mr Bell.
Irish Dramatic Society and Debating Society: Mr John Boyd.
Musical Society: Mr Bainton.

Under the auspices of the committee, by the hard work of many collaborators, the hall underneath the grand-stand was gradually transformed into a theatre and concert-room. It had previously been a refreshment room for race-goers, and the counter had not been removed. For a little while it was used as a

dormitory for prisoners, but the inmates were soon shifted to other quarters, and then, after an interval for cleaning, it was thrown open to the community —placed at their disposal either for religious services or for secular uses.

It was a large and lofty hall with immense windows. The only furniture consisted of a few forms, such as one used to sit upon at school—some of them hastily knocked up by Mr Osborne, a ship's engineer, who was the first official camp carpenter, and the others borrowed from the various barracks, where they had been placed, to serve as stands for the washing basins. The only fixtures, besides the rostrum mentioned, were a couple of stoves. The floor, being of concrete, soon made one's feet painfully cold, unless one were wearing clogs; and the constant clatter of the wooden soles of those clogs on the concrete must linger in many memories as one of the most characteristic of Ruhleben noises.

Every one crowded to the hall, because there was nowhere else to go. The air was so thick with smoke that inflamed eyes were common, to the great advantage of the oculist. The stoves gave very little heat; and the black prisoners in particular huddled round them, suggesting to one humorist the idea that they might advantageously be used, not merely as stokers, but as coals. It was there that Mr Williams, British Chaplain at St George's Church, Berlin, held weekly Church of England services, and the pro-Germans were offered the consolations of religion in their own language.

For these purposes, of course, the hall was cleared by the camp police; but the state of the place when there was no reason for clearing it, was chaotic and confused. Then, being available for many purposes, it served most of its purposes simultaneously; and the best way of depicting the scene may be to give a numbered list of activities observed there on a single morning :—

1. A camp band, in course of formation, was rehearsing.

2. Independently of the band, two or three musicians were separately practising various string and wind instruments.

3. Some professional athletes were practising acrobatic feats.

4. Lessons were being given in old English dances.

5. A projected dramatic entertainment was being rehearsed on a rostrum which had been hastily installed.

6. A horrible hammering proceeded from a railed-off cobbler's shop.

7. In another railed-off partition, barbers were shaving and cutting hair.

8. The Earl of Perth was playing chess—a game of which he was a brilliant exponent—with an ancient mariner of enormous girth.

9. Small card parties were proceeding in odd corners of the hall.



The Promenade des Anglais.



The Grand Stand.

Even that list is not exhaustive; but any one who reads it through and remembers that all these things were going on at once in a hall nearly solid with tobacco smoke, and that human voices as well as hammers and instruments of music were loud in it, will have a very fair impression of the atmosphere and local colour. But the scene was gradually transformed. The fine weather, when it came, helped to empty the hall; alternative 'pitches' were found for the noisier industries; and it was arranged that the hall should be reserved for special purposes at special hours—those purposes including not only entertainments and rehearsals for entertainments, but also debates and public meetings.

Of these last there were a good many in the course of our four years' sojourn, and a little space may be given to one series of them—the meetings which arose out of the great Medal Question.

The trouble seems to have arisen out of our English clubableness. Certain associations were formed, designed to make permanent, in some way, the links which common misfortune had forged. There was talk of dining together annually after the war, of devising some scheme whereby the well-to-do, if there were any left after the war, might help the necessitous, etc. Then came the suggestion that the members of the various associations should procure souvenir badges for the purpose of mutual recognition in the years to come. Something of the nature of the badge which entitles members of certain touring clubs to

special consideration at certain hotels was all that was originally contemplated; but, somehow or other—one can rarely trace the history of such movements—the idea of a badge developed into the idea of a medal. There was talk of engaging an artist to design it.

It was the absurd idea of some inexperienced enthusiast who had failed to appreciate the difference between a souvenir which a man may buy for his own satisfaction and a medal which is the reward bestowed upon him for services rendered to the community; but the wiser heads in the camp realised, at once, the importance of repudiating the ill-conceived proposal. There was abundant opposition to it from the first in the way of ridicule; but it was felt that ridicule did not suffice, and that a more formal repudiation was desirable. To that end, therefore, it was decided to call a public meeting and pass a suitable resolution.

It was a very successful meeting. Mr Prichard presided, and eloquent speeches were delivered by Mr Beaumont, Mr Mackenzie, and several others. The resolutions put were carried unanimously and by acclamation; the enthusiasm being especially keen among the sailors, who had seen through the nonsense as soon as they had heard of it. In short, the true opinion of the camp had spoken. It had registered its refusal to be made ridiculous by the hare-brained chatter of the irresponsible and frivolous; and the irresponsible and frivolous had taken the rebuke

without protest, with the result that the movement subsided as suddenly as it had arisen, and nothing more was heard of it.

Public meetings, however, are not to be classed with entertainments, even when they are incidentally entertaining; and the main purpose of this chapter is to show how music and the drama seemed first to sprout in the grand-stand, pretty much as flowers spring up in the midst of tangled weeds, and how committees and sub-committees adjusted differences, until the wilderness became as orderly as a garden laid out by Lenôtre.

In some forms of entertainment, of course, the efforts of actors and musicians had to be combined; but they also made their separate efforts, and it was the musicians who were, in racing parlance, the first to get off. They had brought their instruments, or they could send for them; and Mr Adler, a musical conductor by profession, set to work at once to train a band and organise a concert. He gave his first concert on December 6, 1914—exactly one month after Internment Day; and Count Schwerin, who loved music far more than he hated his enemies, attended it, and spoke a few words of enthusiastic commendation.

Mr Adler, however—great as is the credit due to him as a pioneer—did not remain very long at his post. Retiring—to be released after no long interval, —he was succeeded by Mr Peebles Conn; and when Mr Peebles Conn, in his turn, was sent to Holland, a

gold watch was subscribed for in the camp, and presented to him as a token of gratitude and regard. He had organised, among other things, promenade concerts to which we listened in the open, lounging in deck chairs, during the summer months; while other able musicians—some of them serious, and others not so serious—gave various other musical entertainments independently of him.[1]

These ranged from a performance of the *Elijah* to the plantation ditties of the gentlemen of colour, and included a production of the forest scenes of *As You Like It*, with new music specially composed for the occasion by Mr Bryceson Treharne, Professor of Music at the University of Adelaide. This last-named entertainment was thus reviewed in the pages of *In Ruhleben Camp* by Mr Peebles Conn :—

'The great success of the play was due in no small measure to Prof. Treharne's music. This is the first occasion on which we have come into contact with the composer, and, with M. Jacques in the play, we

[1] Other musicians to whom a debt of thanks is due included :—

Mr Godfrey Ludlow	Violinist.
Mr Arthur Dodd	'Cellist.
Mr Weber	Conductor.
Mr Bainton	Composer and Conductor.
Mr Arthur Speed	Pianist.
Mr W. Lindsay	Pianist.
Mr George Ferguson	Baritone.
Mr Bonhote	Baritone.
Mr Cutayar	Tenor.
Mr Austin	Tenor.
Professor Keel	Tenor.

would say: "More, prithee, more!" When one considers the limited means which were at the composer's disposal—string quartet and solo flute, which part had, unfortunately, at the last moment, to be played on the organ—then one begins to realise what a fine artist we have in Treharne. The subtle charm which pervades his music was felt by all. It is full of that which is so difficult to describe in words, and which we might term "atmosphere." And then, think of the variety of colours on Treharne's palate![1] Whether he is depicting the entry of Rosalind, of Corin, of Hymen, or of the rustic William, he always finds the keynote of the situation. And how delightful too are his settings of "Under the Greenwood Tree," "Blow, blow, thou Winter Wind," and "It was a Lover and his Lass," which were so well rendered by Messrs Johnston and Austin.'

It will be seen that we knew how to pay each other compliments at Ruhleben; and these particular compliments were unquestionably well deserved. So also, of course, were many others; but space imposes a limit on quotation, for there were two other musical entertainments which merit description in detail before the drama proper is brought under review. The first of these is a revue, chiefly famous because it contained the celebrated Ruhleben Song. That song is probably the only excerpt from a revue ever printed

[1] Mr Treharne was exchanged in the winter of 1915–1916. He subsequently went to the United States, and reports reached the camp that some of his compositions had been produced there.

by the British Government in a White Paper; and as this book may quite possibly fall into the hands of some people who do not make a practice of reading White Papers, it shall be reproduced in full :—

Oh, we're roused up in the morning,
When the day is gently dawning,
And we're put to bed before the night's begun;
And for weeks and weeks on end,
We have never seen a friend,
And we've lost the job our energy had won.
Yes, we've waited in the frost
For a parcel that got lost,
Or a letter that the postmen never bring;
And it isn't beer and skittles,
Doing work on scanty victuals,
Yet every man can still get up and sing,—So

CHORUS :—

Line up, boys, and sing this chorus,
Shout this chorus all you can;
We want the people there,
To hear in Leicester Square,
That we're the boys that never get down-hearted.
Back, back, back again in England,
Then we'll fill a flowing cup;
And tell 'em clear and loud of the Ruhleben crowd,
That always kept their pecker up.

Oh, we send our love and kisses,
To our sweetheart or our missus,
And we say the life we lead is simply grand;
And we stroll around the Tea-us,
Where the girls can sometimes see us,
And we say it's just as good as down the Strand.
Yet there sometimes comes a minute,
When we see there's nothing in it,
And the tale that we've been telling isn't true;
Down our spine there comes a-stealing,
Just that little home-sick feeling,
Then I'll tell you, boys, the best thing you can do.

CHORUS :—
Line up, boys, etc.

The words, by Mr C. H. Brooks, are appropriate; but it was the tune which took the camp by storm. That it was absolutely original has been disputed. Learned musicians among us used to trace it to a remote source, just as *Tarara-boom-de-ay* used to be traced to the rhythm of *La donna è mobile*, the 'See-saw Valse,' declared to have stolen its secret from the Soldiers' Chorus in *Faust*, and 'Twenty love-sick maidens we,' denounced as a plagiarism of 'Hark, my soul, it is the Lord'; but the fact remains that the air became so popular at Ruhleben that it even, for a season, superseded 'Tipperary.'

The other entertainment which clamours to be

recalled is that given by the Ruhleben Literary and Debating Society on Trafalgar Day, Monday, October 21st, 1918; and the date is important, as it explains a good deal. The German defences were known to be crumbling, and the end was well in sight. The Germans themselves saw it coming as clearly as we did. A note of exultation could be struck with absolute confidence that any Germans present would listen to it with good humour. And struck it was. Patriotic songs had, at one time, been forbidden in the camp; but now both 'Hearts of Oak' and 'Rule Britannia' were flaunted on the programme. The full words were printed, so that all could join in the chorus. Nor was that all—there was still a surprise to come.

One item on the programme had been left mysterious. It was announced simply as 'a reading' by Captain Coates. Only a few men were in Captain Coates's confidence, and shared his secret; the majority had not the least notion what was coming. Captain Coates began to read; and then eyes were opened, and ears were pricked up. Surely, surely he was reading—suppressing only names and dates—the story of the great raid on the Zeebrugge Mole. So far as his listeners would tell, the story corresponded, in every detail, with the story of that great adventure. It was very daring—even with the end in sight. Would anything happen?

But all that happened was that Captain Coates, having finished his reading, closed the book,



A Comedy in Three Acts
by
J. M. SYNGE.
Commencing Wednesday, January 19th, 1916.

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CAST.

CHRISTOPHER MAHON	.....	A. G. Wilson
OLD MAHON (his father)	.....	T. J. Gray
MICHAEL JAMES FLAHERTY (Michael James)	..	R. D. Carty
MARGARET FLAHERTY (Pegeen Mike)	.....	Desmond Greene
SHAWN KEOGH (a young farmer)	.....	H. M. Alexander
WIDOW QUIN (a woman of 30)	.....	R. Muire
PHILLY CULLEN (small farmers)	.....	B. McCount
JIMMY FARRELL (small farmers)	.....	R. G. Buckley
SARA TANSEY	.....	H. E. Greenwood
SUSAN BRADY (Village colleens)	.....	V. M'Mahon
HONOR BLAKE (Village colleens)	.....	R. P. Russell
NELLY COLLINS (Village colleens)	.....	D. H. Lee

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The action takes place near a village on the wild coast of Mayo. The first act passes on an evening of autumn; the other two acts on the following day.

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Irish Music arranged by Jack Power.

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STAGE MANAGER:-	R.D. Carty.
DRESSES by:-	W. T. Brixie.
SCENIC ARTISTS:-	Messrs. Saville, Kraub, Stein and Watkins.
MALE COSTUMES:-	Abbey Theatre, Dublin.
PRODUCED by:-	R. Muire Smyllie.

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PROGRAMME PRINTED by Ruhleben Printing Works. Bm.

The Bill of the Play.

and said, before the applause had time to break out :—

'What I have read you is an extract from the *Life of Nelson*—the story of Nelson's gallant attack on Teneriffe.'

Then the real thrill ran through the house—exultant joy in the thought that the British Navy had kept the Nelson touch, and that what England had done in the eighteenth century she could still do in the twentieth. The storm burst. It was no mere storm, but a tornado. The cheers were wellnigh loud enough to break the prison walls.

CHAPTER XVI

THE THEATRE—THE ACTORS—THE STAGE MANAGERS—THE THEATRICAL COSTUMIERS

THE first play produced at the Ruhleben theatre was Mr George Bernard Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion*; the second was a revue, put together by local talent, entitled *Legs and the Woman*; the third was Mr John Galsworthy's *Strife*. The enumeration need be carried no further in order to show that there were, from the very first, two conflicting streams of dramatic tendency in the camp—as, no doubt, there always are in all play-going communities.

One group of men looked to the theatre only for amusement; to another group it was the most serious of all the arts, and the handmaid of the Churches and the Schools. The latter were ridiculed by the former as Supermen; and the ranks of the Supermen included such distinguished representatives as Mr Duncan Jones, the author of that brilliant novel, *The Everlasting Search*, Mr Leigh Henry, who had been associated with some of Mr Gordon Craig's productions, and Mr Hatfield, a chemist. A notable name in the list of their opponents was that of Mr J. Crossland Briggs. From certain heated conversations occasionally overheard, one might have inferred a probability that the excited exponents of the two schools of thought would

come to blows; but they got no further than an interchange of sarcastic letters—some of them published by *In Ruhleben Camp*—from which the following may be extracted :—

'I am instructed by the Committee of the R.D.S. to give you the following reply to your application to produce *The Master Builder*: "The Committee of the R.D.S. have considered Mr Hatfield's English translation of *The Master Builder*, and regret they are unable to pass it, as they do not consider it fit for Ruhleben. The play possesses no dramatic merit, is absolutely deficient in action, and the dialogue, in the opinion of the Committee, does not attain the necessary level to compensate for these deficiencies."

'Yours,—'

This dispute as to the merit of Ibsen's great work is one which the historians may be contented to record, without indicating any personal bias, accepting, as they do, the philosophic doctrine, prevalent in the camp at the time, that it takes all sorts to make a world, and that there was ample room, in so large a society, for specialisation of function among both actors and producers. In the end, all the ground from Shakespeare to the Music Hall glasses was covered so completely that this narrative would, if the narrators were not careful, resolve itself into a long series of lists of plays and players. Trying to

avoid that pitfall, they will, at any rate, begin with a list of the *dramatis personæ* in the first play given—produced under the direction of Mr N. G. Kapp, with costumes designed and made by Dr Lechmere, and armour designed and made by Mr G. Smith :—

ANDROCLES, *a Christian,*	F. C. Reynolds.
MAGAERA, *his wife,*	Eric M. Johnson.
THE LION, ...	J. R. Wilson.
CENTURION, ...	A. B. Butcher.
CAPTAIN, ...	E. Duncan-Jones.
LAVINIA, *a Christian,*	J. A. West.
FERROVIUS, *her brother,*	N. G. Kapp
SPINTHO, *a drunkard,*	T. A. Barton.
LENTULUS, *Roman patrician,* ..	C. J. Pearce.
METELLUS, ,, ..	T. C. Eden.
CÆSAR, ...	H. S. Hatfield.
EDITOR *of The Arena*	H. E. Truelove.
KEEPER *of the beasts,*	G. Morit.
RETIARIUS, *gladiator,*	A. Healey Hislop.
SECUTOR, ,, ...	H. F. Hamlyn.
OX-DRIVER, ...	C. King.
CALL-BOY, ...	Freddy Brett.

Not long after this intellectual performance, the first of many revues was produced—music by Mr Austin, and libretto by Mr Brooks—under the direction of Mr John Roker, who had arrived in Berlin, in July, 1914, with a contract as ballet master at the Metropole Theatre. He acted as ballet-master at Ruhleben

instead, and gave the camp a genuine surprise by introducing a chorus of 'show girls,' led by a chief soubrette in the person of Mr Alex. Underwood. Shortly after this performance, he accepted the regular post of stage-manager, while Mr Bert Tapp, a manager of a theatrical company, took charge of the front of the house—a post which he filled, save for the fact that he did not wear evening dress, with the same style with which he would have filled it anywhere else.

Revues, of course, even more than other theatrical performances, presented possibilities against which it was necessary to guard. In revolutionary times, the actor is often a stormy petrel; and the comic actor is specially liable to regard himself as a chartered libertine. A censorship had, therefore, to be established, and the military authorities allowed us to appoint our own censor of plays. The post was assigned to Mr J. H. Thorpe, who, at the outbreak of war, was director of the Otis Lift Company in Berlin; and he discharged its duties to the general satisfaction. None of the jests passed by him quite transgressed the boundaries of political circumspection—which were gradually extended as time passed—though some of them came pretty near the line—the gibe, for instance, of the player who, being asked in a pantomime whether he had any butter in the larder, replied that he believed he had a little in his jewel-case. He probably had plenty of it, consigned to him from England in a parcel, whereas the German officers who

were witnessing the performance had lived a butterless life for many days. Their laughter—for they are said to have laughed—must have been rather forced.

This pantomime—*Cinderella* was the subject chosen—was, it may be remarked in passing, remarkable for a discovery of real talent. Not only did Mr Goodhind enact the title rôle with charm and grace; but Mr Harry Stafford did wonders as a low comedian. He was not a variety artist before the war, but he has gone on to the variety stage since his return to England, having served his apprenticeship at the Ruhleben Empire; and all Ruhlebenites will heartily and confidently wish him a prosperous career. The Ruhleben Follies have also been performing in London, since the termination of the war, and with no less success than their brothers in art, the Timbertown Follies from Holland.

Moreover, this pantomime of ours made such a stir, not only in the camp, but outside it, that the American Ambassador expressed a wish to be invited. The matter was laid before the Commandant, who assented with enthusiasm. An invitation, in due form, was prepared, and sent; and on New Year's Day, 1916, the company had the honour of playing before Mr and Mrs Gerard, Mr and Mrs J. Grew, the naval and military attachés, and all the secretaries and ladies attached to the Embassy. And the thing was done in style. Small round tables were set out in the centre of the hall in front of the stage, and profusely decorated with flowers. The Embassy visitors sat

at these tables; and, during the interval, tea and biscuits were served to them.

By that time, of course, the theatre and all its arrangements were really ship-shape; and though the details of stage carpentry do not make interesting reading, a few facts may be set forth. A proscenium had been painted, and there were proper footlights —the first footlights having been supplied by candles placed in condensed milk tins. Scenery had also been painted, or imported; and the camp carpenters had knocked up dressing-rooms, a stage door, and similar appurtenances of theatres. There was also a box-office, at which reserved seats could be booked. The queues outside these were almost as long as those to be seen outside London theatres; and, just as in London, 'boy messengers' used to be engaged at 6d. or 1s. a day to keep places in the queue for the wealthier patrons of the drama.

As for the costumes, some of these had to be hired from Berlin, but others were made in the camp, where some men showed a real talent as theatrical costumiers. Among the most distinguished of these were Mr Archibald Welland (who has written on the subject, since his return, in the *English Review*), Mr Lechmere, and Mr Pat Caleb. A delightful article which *In Ruhleben Camp* published on 'The Ruhleben Clarkson' contains a rich store of detailed information on the subject; and some notes on the dressing of *Androcles and the Lion* and other plays will be read with interest:

'The lion was built of one cocoa tin, half a sack, some wire, and a woolly mat (the latter was a real sacrifice to art, for it had been the pride of the box). The armour for the Roman officers consisted chiefly of cardboard furnished by the Parcels Office, some paint, and a lavish allowance of string. Lavinia cost the society five metres of muslin, three metres of red silk ribbon, and eight metres of gold braid—the total cost being, at the outside, M. 4.50.'

'In wrestling with the question of modern dresses, Mr Welland came to the fore, and for *The Three Plays* produced two sets of mourning with hats, one evening frock, two flappers' dresses, and one old lady's go-to-party get-up, at a total cost of M. 30.'

'The second Irish play, *Mrs M'Ginty's Lodger*, was dressed by Mr Pat Caleb, who, despite the fact that this was his first attempt in the dressmaking direction, turned out six charming frocks and petticoats and one cape. The total cost was M. 63, and it is Mr Caleb's boast that not a single pin was necessary to aid his dresses in their sit.'

And then followed the reporter's comment:—

'By the way, do not show this article to your wife when you get home, or you may get into trouble for not having learnt a little useful dressmaking. Still,



The Theatre.



A Theatrical Poster.

on the other hand, you may be able to show her what dressmakers' bills really ought to be.'

The costumes, of course, like everything else connected with the theatre, improved when, thanks to the box-office takings, it became possible to spend more money on them; while the standard of acting and stage management also rose. There were, as has already been mentioned, about a dozen societies continually engaged in catering for the entertainment of the camp; and there was always something in view to suit every dramatic and musical taste. Thanks to the men brought in from Belgium, French as well as English pieces were staged—some of Alfred de Musset's comedies, and *Le Contrôleur des Wagon-lits* among them; and even a French critic could hardly have found fault with the accent of the majority of the performers. The Shakespeare anniversary was celebrated with enthusiasm, as at Stratford-on-Avon. There were pianoforte recitals, and ballad concerts, and nights with Burns. There was an Eisteddfod; and there was not only the Ruhleben Empire, already mentioned, but also the Ruhleben Hippodrome.

This last-named had Mr Charles Whitfield for its acting manager, Mr Ian Hartland for its stage director, and Mr E. C. Macmillan for its musical director; and this chapter cannot be concluded more appropriately than with an enumeration of the 'turns' announced for Saturday, October 23, 1916, 'and following nights':—

1. Overture.
2. A. A. Scott, ... Ballooning.
3. Messrs Macintosh, Winter, Charnley, Nelson, .. Skating.
4. A. Underwood, ... Comedienne.
5. Messrs Merritt and Wilson.. Yei-Yei.
6. Harry Marshall, ... Light Comedian.
7. Ray and Martin, ... Lunatic Bakers.
8. Interval and Selection.
9. Pete and Jose, ... American Dancers.
10. Charles Whitfield, .. Comedian.
11. Musical Revue.

ON THE PIER

Book by J. Dolton. Dances arranged by W. Maurice.

CAST.

George Merritt as The Pier Attendant.
H. S. Brown as The Waiter.
E. Nelson as The Bathing-Machine Woman.
Messrs W. Maurice, T. W. Wilson, Colin Bell, Harry Marshall, P. W. Cameron, A. Underwood, F. Winter, E. Williams, N. Charnley, T. Luff.

Scene: Puddle-on-Sea.

Our best comedian, as has already been indicated, was Mr Harry Stafford. In tragedy, honours were

divided between Mr C. G. Hopkirk and Mr G. Merritt. Mr Alex. Underwood excelled as a soubrette, and Mr Harold Goodhind as a prima donna, who sang with equal facility in French, English, and German. Female parts were admirably taken by Desmond Greene, who also shone in the Irish plays. Mr J. H. Thorpe achieved success as an elderly lady. Our best dancer was Mr P. Maurice; and Mr Aubrey Hersee, the stage manager, was also a good all-round actor.

CHAPTER XVII

THE Y.M.C.A. HALL—THE CIRCULATING LIBRARY—THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY—WHAT BECAME OF THE CABBAGE LEAVES—THE FLOWER SHOWS

MENTION has, several times, been made of our Y.M.C.A. Hall. This was a gift to the Camp of the American Young Men's Christian Association, and was erected on one of our rapidly disappearing open spaces in the course of the autumn of 1915—built by a German contractor, tightly bound by his agreement, concluded with the captain of the camp, who was assisted and advised by Rittmeister von Brocken, to complete the work at a stipulated date under penalty of a fine for every day's delay. Let it be added that the contractor was up to time, and that no fine had to be exacted.

The hall was primarily intended to serve devotional purposes; but the Young Men's Christian Association has not, of late years, drawn a very rigid line between religious and secular activities, but has recognised recreation as the handmaid of religion. It did so at Ruhleben; and the building which it installed in the camp served many ends. Lectures were delivered in it; classes were held in it; and boxing competitions also took place within its precincts. Above all, it was a welcome addition to our comfort as 'somewhere

to go' when men were tired of confinement in their lofts and horse-boxes, and were excluded from the hall under the grand-stand because some public entertainment was being either given or prepared there. Let us therefore acknowledge our debt of gratitude to Mr Hart and Mr Hoffmann of the American Y.M.C.A.

Other activities, albeit minor ones, which met felt wants, and met them well, were our messenger service, which issued postage stamps, and our circulating library. The originator of the latter enterprise was Mr J. H. Platford, whose name has already figured many times in this narrative; and he must be specially commended for having seen the need and catered for it almost as soon as he reached the camp. It was on November 13, 1914, that he opened his library, on a small scale, in his horse-box. Two days later he had got his rules drawn up and approved; and on December 3 he issued his first report, wherefrom it appeared that his stock comprised 370 books, and that his subscribers numbered 350. A week later, the membership had increased to 429, and the number of transactions recorded was 1967.

Further progress was made as the knowledge of the existence of the library was spread in the camp. The non-commissioned officer in charge of Mr Platford's barrack complained that the crowd which it drew to his horse-box was a nuisance to him; and another location had to be sought. Premises were found, first underneath the grand-stand buffet, and afterwards in some of the betting-boxes; and here Mr Platford

continued to direct the business which he had founded until his departure for Holland in 1918. His first assistants were Messrs R. Stewart, H. C. Walsh, J. Walmsley, and W. Wright—all chartered accountants, and all in the service of Mr Platford's firm. One of them, Mr Walmsley, succeeded Mr Platford in his other office of camp treasurer. Other men who, at later dates, did good work in the library, were Mr P. Dootson, a Doctor of Chemistry, Mr P. Linnel, a student, and Messrs Tooth and Gwynne.

The first catalogue of the library was issued in the autumn of 1915. It was a catalogue of more than 2000 volumes, and was sold for one mark. Supplements at 1d. or 1½d., according to the state of the library finances at the time, were subsequently issued; and the library eventually occupied four betting boxes, fitted up with boards made of the packing cases in which parcels had been delivered by the American Express Company. Unfortunately, the shops had neither heat nor light; but the former difficulty was surmounted, in defiance of the regulations, by the use of charcoal stoves made from empty corned beef tins.

Bookbinding was one of the necessary operations which the librarians undertook. At first Mr Platford used to repair books, to the best of his ability, with gum, string, and paper. Subsequently, when bookbinding classes were started in the camp, he attended them, learnt bookbinding, and taught it to his assistants; and then, first with material procured locally, and

afterwards with material sent out from England, all the bound books were rebound and all the paper books firmly rebacked. And all these services were rendered without the exaction of subscriptions; all the expenses being covered by the fines imposed upon clients who kept books longer than the allotted time. Nominally these fines were at the rate of five pfennigs a day; but they were reduced when the financial situation permitted, and it often happened that no fine at all was asked for.

And next a word, since this is a miscellaneous chapter, about our Horticultural Society.

Like most of the attempts at improvement, the attempt to make Ruhleben a Garden City was a spontaneous movement which the camp organisation did not take in hand until later. That is to say, the gardens came first, and the Horticultural Society came afterwards. Already in the summer of 1915, small and modest gardens began to appear beneath the windows of a number of the barracks; and the suspicious whispered that this was a German trick—that the Germans wanted to photograph these gardens in order to prove to the world that their Ruhleben prisoners were being pampered. But that was a mistake. The idea of the gardens had originated with the gardeners—men whose sole desire was to introduce a little beauty into their surroundings. Some of them grew shrubs in order to hide the barbed wire. The sailors of Barrack VIII. made a rose-garden, and were very proud of it. Confidence was gradually established that the military authorities would not interfere.

Then, after the gardens had become to bloom, the Horticultural Society was founded. Its first president was Mr Warner of the Dunlop Tyre Company, and its subscription was one mark a year. At the end of 1916, the activity had so extended that its promoters asked to be recognised as a sub-committee of the camp, under the Captains' Committee. The request was granted; and Mr P. W. R. Simon, sometime vice-captain of the camp, was appointed captains' delegate to the sub-committee. They had already procured the use of a strip of ground behind the wash-house, on which they had erected a few frames, in which to prepare plants for the coming season; and in January, 1917, they raised the question: Might they not be allowed to turn the unused half of the race-course into a kitchen garden?

Negotiations to that end were opened with the military authorities. Their sanction obtained, a contract was arranged with the proprietors, for the use of the space at a rent of one hundred marks per month. Then volunteers were called for, tools were procured, the land was tilled and manured, and seed was purchased in England. A loan of £400 from the Captains' Committee launched the enterprise on its way; but it prospered so exceedingly that, at the end of the first season, not only had the whole of the loan been repaid, but a substantial reserve was in hand for the operations of 1918. It was not the least useful of the camp undertakings; and there were times when it may well have seemed the most useful



Stamps Issued by the Ruhleben Post Office.

of them. It meant that fresh vegetables were on sale at nominal prices in the Ruhleben canteen, at times when Berlin housewives were jostling each other for the privilege of buying them at exorbitant prices in the greengrocers' shops.

Naturally, none but our own men were allowed to purchase them. Naturally, too, the Germans tried to evade our regulations, just as we had evaded so many of theirs. 'During my absence from the camp,' notes Mr Powell, 'Captain Amelunxen demanded fifteen red cabbages for the officers' mess, and also gave an order that all outer cabbage leaves must be delivered to serve as cattle fodder. This at a time when red cabbages were hardly procurable for love or money in Berlin. The Horticultural Society laid the matter before the captains; and the captains decided unanimously that, as the cabbages had been grown from seed supplied from England on the specific understanding that only the interned were to benefit, the officers' mess must go without its fifteen red cabbages. As for the leaves, he was told that he might have them in exchange for manure to be supplied by German cattle. On that condition they were duly handed over; but I have reason to believe that they were intercepted on their way to the cattle, and eaten.'

Cabbages, however, constituted only a small portion of the Ruhleben garden produce. There was a potting shed, and a glass house, with steam-heating supplied from a boiler—the whole of the house and heating

installation put up by our own men; and in it was produced a really wonderful crop of melons and tomatoes. Flowers, too, were cultivated. Cut flowers, and flowers in pots, decorated most of the boxes; and we had our horticultural shows. Both Baron and Baroness Gevers and Ridder van Rappart of the Netherlands Legation always made a point of attending these exhibitions, and particularly admired a show of sweet peas, grown by Mr Roberts, who desired, as an expert, to demonstrate that sweet peas could be grown in Germany in spite of the dry climate.

CHAPTER XVIII

LITERATURE AT RUHLEBEN—SOME VERSES COMPOSED IN THE CAMP—'HARVEST' BY CECIL DUNCAN JONES

It remains to be seen whether any really great prison literature was written at Ruhleben. At present one can only say that, if it was, it has not yet been published; and the preceding chapters of this book must at least have made it clear that the circumstances were unfavourable to that mental detachment which ambitious literary work requires. Even the abounding vitality of the camp—so welcome as a symptom of sound health—may well have been an obstacle to its attainment. Wretched men may not always be cradled into poetry by wrong; but strenuous men are seldom cradled into it by committee meetings.

To be alone at Ruhleben was practically impossible; and some men felt the need of occasional solitude bitterly. One man once told me triumphantly, how he had achieved it by locking himself up in a lonely shed, of which he temporarily had the key as the secretary of a Dramatic Society using it for rehearsals. It was a damp, unpleasant place, cold and drafty, with a muddy floor, unfurnished except for the chair which he carried about with him; but at least he had the place to himself, and could do a little mental

stocktaking without disturbance. But his case was unique. There were not sheds for all. I doubt whether any one else, at that time, ever enjoyed the separate use of a shed.

The only way of obtaining even the illusion of solitude in the early days was to go for a walk in the dark, or to lie awake after other men had gone to sleep. Men's thoughts, in those circumstances, might escape from the trivial and immediate, and even marshal themselves in some literary formation; but it was obviously impossible to write in the dark, either in the open or in a horse-box. Nor was it easy to write in the day time in a compartment in which other men were shaving, or playing cards, or making salads, or speculating as to their prospects of exchange, or discussing the military operations, or arguing about matters of no importance.

Journalism, no doubt, is possible under such conditions; for the conditions under which journalism is not possible have yet to be discovered. One can even imagine journalists, on the Day of Judgment, regarding the end of the world merely as a spectacle to be reported for 'the paper that gets the scoops,' and rushing about, trying to pick up scraps of exclusive information from the archangels. But journalism and literature are different things. The journalist prefers to work quite close to his subject; the man of letters to stand back and contemplate it from a little distance. What more natural, then, than that journalism, adapting itself to its limitations, should have flourished

at Ruhleben, but that literature should have laboured more consciously under the weight of fetters? And that in spite of the lectures and the educational facilities!

One book, at any rate, was not only written at Ruhleben, but published (anonymously) in England while its author was still interned there. It consisted of a selection from a prisoner's letters home. The letters formed a very interesting volume; they accurately mirrored the life of one small, but very interesting, coterie in the camp. Those who read them in England, looking for peevish complaints and bitter cries, were astounded at the record which they found in them of high thinking which made little of the discomforts of plain living, and of the successful pursuit of the consolations of philosophy under the inspiring guidance of Henri Bergson. But the letters were not a conscious literary effort; and they did not quite warrant the conclusion that the camp had produced a Bunyan or a Silvio Pellico.

Notes for future histories of the camp were, of course, taken plentifully; but not all the notes remained in the possession of their authors. An immense heap of notes—a whole huge armful of them—was once carried off by a soldier from a barrack loft to the Commandantur, where it remained. The author of them, being exchanged to England, after about a year's internment, wrote his history without his notes, and it certainly makes very lively reading; but it was not a work of imagination,

and it is not, of course, of objective chronicles of the camp life—kept within the bounds of discretion by the necessary blue pencil of the Press Bureau—that one is thinking when one speaks of Ruhleben literature. Otherwise one would mention Mr Israel Cohen's *Ruhleben Prison Camp*. What one is looking for is some piece of imaginative work actually composed at Ruhleben.

Novels, I know, were being written at the time in some of the officers' camps. I lately heard of such a novel (though I have not had the opportunity of reading it) with the taking title, suggestive of anything rather than war: *The Garden of Gethsemane, or The Lady in the Case.* The manuscript was confiscated; but the author claimed it with menaces during the armistice, and got it. From Ruhleben, however, there has so far come no similar story of a work of fiction; the literary effort generally taking the form of poetry.

Sets of verses, composed in the watches of the night, used often to be passed from hand to hand in the cold, uncomfortable times before any ordered schemes of either work or play had been launched. I remember an Ode to Ruhleben Clogs, shown to me by Professor Treharne, who had been asked to set it to music; and I have a very lively recollection of a night of inky darkness on which I heard a number of melodious men, afterwards some of our most popular entertainers, crooning a Ruhleben ditty which one of them had composed. It was modelled on our old friend, 'A

was an archer who shot at a frog,' and went through all the letters of the alphabet, with a chorus at frequent intervals. Some of the lines were more suitable for a camp than a drawing-room; but no exception can be taken to the refrain, which ran as follows :—

Merry, oh, merry, oh, merry, are we!
Ruhleben Camp is the one place for me.
There's soup, and there's skilly, and coffee, and bread,
And a nice German coffin as soon as you're dead.

For hours, as it seemed to me, the melodious men droned and re-droned that melancholy quatrain. The effect, on a night so dark that one could not see their faces, and could only dimly discern their forms, was very weird; and I shall never forget it.

It was in that same shed that, as I have already related, I heard a skipper whom I could not see announcing, at the top of his voice, the fate which, in his opinion, the Germans deserved and would get; and I was myself aroused into composing a sonnet on the subject before I went to sleep. I had not forgotten it when I awoke, and here it is, reproduced from the *Daily Express* :—

'LE MOT DE LA SITUATION.'

We thanked you, master mariner, for the phrase,
Not fit for drawing-rooms or ears polite,

But just a crude expression of the right,
Thrown out to help us in our darkest days,
When insolent flags affronted all the ways,
Commemorating some victorious fight,
And our imprisoned hearts were black as night,
No longer lit by hope's extinguished rays.

For you, good mariner, took not that tone,
But bawled aloud, regardless whom you shocked,
Who overheard, or who the tale might tell,
Your voice as resonant as your megaphone:
'Cheer up, my lads, you'll see the bloomers knocked
A hundred miles the other side of Hell!'

It was a humble tribute to the spirit of optimism which never, at Ruhleben, failed the mercantile marine: a spirit to which I once heard a sailor man in Barrack V. give very forcible expression. He was engaged in some altercation with Sergeant Gadow; and in order to make his meaning absolutely clear, he interlarded a few words of German: 'What do you take us for?' he exclaimed. 'We ain't slaves—we're Englishmen, and don't you forget it. *Warten sie bis English Soldaten kommt Berlin*—they'll show you—then you'll be gebusted.' Or if he did not say 'gebusted,' then he used some still more powerful locution.

But that is by the way. I must return to our literary efforts. These, no less than the conversations of the sailors, generally breathed a spirit of optimism; and as I have no right to pad my book with any man's

verses but my own, glad, as I should be to do so,—and as there were not enough of these to fill a separate volume—I shall venture to introduce a few more of them. The following was written at the time of one of the offensives of Lord Kitchener's Army, from which we hoped so much :—

AUFSTEHEN !

Aufstehen, William ! You must hurry up, to-day !
Kitchener is knocking at the door.
He knows he isn't wanted, but he will not go away,—
He keeps on knocking at the door.
He hasn't come alone, but he's brought the familee,—
A swarm of little cousins who have sailed across the sea,
And mean to have a hot time in the City on the Spree—
And they're all there, knocking at the door.

Aufstehen, William ! The hour is getting late,—
There's a fearful noise of knocking at the door.
Aufstehen, William ! The Gaul is at the gate,
And it's Kitchener who's knocking at the door.
Aufstehen, William ! You've had your little fling,
But quite forgot, when having it, that time was on the wing,
So we've got the Hohenzollerns in a row upon a string,
Now that Kitchener is knocking at the door.

Rat-a-tat ! Rat-a-tat ! A noise to wake the dead !
Kitchener a-knocking at the door !
The front door, the back door, and up above your head,
Kitchener a-hammering the floor !

So tumble up, and tumble out, and tumble down the stairs,
You, and Mrs W., and all your sons and heirs,
Saying, 'Aren't you rather early, sir, it took us unawares,
To find your lordship knocking at the door.'

Aufstehen! Aufstehen! Show his lordship up!
Can't you hear him knocking at the door?
His lordship's come to breakfast, and he means to stay to sup,
So you mustn't keep him waiting at the door.
It's work you're unaccustomed to, but put away your pride,
And bow your head politely, saying, 'Please to step inside.'
For Kitchener's the sort of guest that will not be denied,
And Kitchener is knocking at the door.

The lines had a special local significance, because *Aufstehen* ('Get up!') was the formula with which raucous non-commissioned officers used to rouse us from our slumbers in the dark. They were occasionally recited in sheds, and at tea-parties, and they have been printed in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Other lines, printed in the *Westminster Gazette*, rendered the same hope in graver manner:—

A RUHLEBEN DREAM

We slept in our captivity, and dreamt of the advance :
The bloody murder, all day long, on the pleasant plains of France.
They had kept the tidings from us, but the truth had trickled through,
And we knew the boys were doing what we'd known the boys would do.

It seemed our ears were glued to earth to listen for the tramp
Of armies ever moving on towards Ruhleben Camp.
It seemed we caught the roll of drums, and rumour ran before
A myriad horsemen thundering through the Brandenburgerthor.

Cold were the nights and dark where we on straw in stables lay;
But the visions springing in our brains were brighter than the day.
The scene was set; the curtain rose; the hosts came riding on :
Dragoons, hussars, and lancers, and the Cossacks of the Don.

A mighty host so varied that men asked, Who are these?
Men from beyond the Urals; men from the Southern Seas;

The yellow men from Nippon; the swarthy sons of Ind;
And the Riders of the Prairies whose feet are like the wind.

The Belgians re-arisen from a flaming German Hell;
The gallant sons of gallant Gaul, who always fought so well;
And the khaki line extended o'er hills, and plains, and vales,
From England, Scotland, Ireland, and valiant little Wales.

All night we saw them riding, all night and every night,
'Till every sound that reached us seemed an echo from the fight.
And the creakings of our stable doors were the shrieks of smitten foes,
For we felt the nets were closing, and we dreamt we saw them close.

'A little time,' we told ourselves, 'a little time, and these
'In the pleasances of Potsdam shall laugh and take their ease,
With the flag of England flaunted there in glory over all,'
—And so we slept contentedly in our Ruhleben stall.

Another theme on which one was inevitably drawn to seek a new variation—at all events in the evil days at the beginning—was the famous one of Richard Lovelace: 'Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage.' I tried, one night, when sleep was slow in coming; and this is what I made of it:—

NIGHT AT RUHLEBEN

The slow hours creep and creep,
  Till night the day redeems.
Thank God who gives us sleep!
  Thank God who sends us dreams!

By day, barbarian Powers
  May herd us in their pen;
The night—the night is ours;
  They cannot hold us then.

Six prisoners in one stall!
  O'er each his blanket spread!
And no man there at all,—
  Each on his errand sped.

The gates are open wide,—
  Those gates they guard by day;
Through those broad gates we ride,—
  Away, away, away!

Each takes a lonely track,
  For each must travel far,
And knows he must be back
  Before the morning star.

None brings a traveller's tale,
  For each has been to seek
Some life behind a veil
  Of which he does not speak.

All went, and none was missed;
  All journeyed while they slept.
For each man had a tryst,
  And each his tryst has kept.

And each, last night, drank deep
  From Life's restoring streams.
Thank God who gives us sleep!
  Thank God who sends us dreams!

But I must not, and I have no wish to, fill this chapter with quotations from my own writings. There was one man in the camp who, I think, but for the abhorred shears, might eventually have found in it inspiration for that great literary work which ought to be the outcome of every great experience. I speak of Cecil Duncan-Jones.

He was still, when brought to Ruhleben, of an impressionable age; but he had already given his proofs by publishing a novel of great merit and greater promise. He took an active part in the intellectual and artistic life of the camp, and also in its religious life. He was one of the actors in the first play produced in the camp, and one of the organisers of the brief evening services held on the grand-stand. Unfortunately he was an invalid, for whom the hardships of the life proved too severe. Always delicate, and often ill, he was one of those transferred to Holland; and there he got worse instead of better, just living to see the end of the war, and to be brought to England, where he died of pernicious anaemia, a few days after his arrival. Among the souvenirs of Ruhleben which Mr Powell brought home with him was a typed copy of a poem by him, entitled: 'Harvest, 1915.' I would gladly conclude this chapter by quoting the whole of it, if I knew to whom to apply for the necessary permission. Even without permission, I must venture to quote a part of it, selecting a few stanzas from the beginning and the end:—

> Thou, who has set apart the souls
> Of those within these prison walls,
> Shielding them from blood and death,
> Make us wise with every breath.
> Held immune from mortal strife,
> See thy disciples, Lord of Life.

Hostages of England, we
With trembling spirits do foresee
How England's spirit, England's name,
Look to us to lift her fame.
Here we found it in the dust;
Let us lift it like the Host.
. . . .

Thousands yield their precious breath
To the bleak accountant, Death,
Since naught else of theirs will pay
All the Nations owe to-day.
Other Powers claim our strife,
Enemies not of Death, but Life.
Father, let us understand
How thine insuperable command
Moved and held and holds us where
We may thy priceless gifts repair.
We cannot give as gave the dead,
But let us offer life instead.
So that when, in thine own Spring,
War shall droop his iron wing,
East and West and South and North,
Regenerate we shall go forth;
Masters of the secret grain,
Bringing plenty out of pain.

Lines which very fittingly express the spiritual side of the material effort of which this book is the chronicle.



Journalism at Ruhleben: some Magazine Covers.

CHAPTER XIX

JOURNALISM AT RUHLEBEN—'IN RUHLEBEN CAMP'—'THE RUHLEBEN CAMP MAGAZINE'—MR FILMORE'S PARODY OF 'ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE'—'ALICE THROUGH THE LAGER GLASS'

WHEREAS literature struggled for existence at Ruhleben, journalism was able to flourish there; and that, perhaps, is what might have been expected. A new community may live on the literature of older communities; but it needs newspapers of its own. Moreover, the need for newspapers is felt by numbers of people who have not learnt to regard literature as indispensable.

The time came, though it did not come immediately, when Ruhleben even had its daily paper, though this was only a typed news sheet, containing little except the bulletins of the various army commanders, translated from the German Press for the benefit of men who did not know German. The most interesting number (and the one which probably had the largest circulation) was that which set forth the terms of the armistice, and satisfied the interned that the military plenipotentiaries had not overlooked the case of civilian prisoners. Still, it is not this news sheet which is likely to attract collectors. Their interest will probably be concentrated on the more ambitious printed periodicals, published at fortnightly or longer intervals.

Several of these lie scattered on the table on which this article is being written.

There are periodicals in three languages: French and Italian as well as English; but the French and Italian publications belong to the educational rather than the journalistic history of the camp—many of the contributors being men who had but lately learnt the languages in which they undertook to express themselves. The French paper was *La Vie Française de Ruhleben*. The two Italian papers (but these were only typed) were *Messagero* and *L'Eco*—both of them illustrated in colours. Most of the staff of the latter had learnt their Italian in the camp under the competent direction of Mr Prichard; and Mr Prichard may well be proud of the fact that one of his pupils, Mr Vincent —a beginner when he joined his classes—was not only capable of editing an Italian periodical before he left, but won an Italian scholarship at Oxford when he got home.

More widely interesting, however, are the English periodicals, *In Ruhleben Camp*, and the *Ruhleben Camp Magazine*, from which so many quotations have been taken to illustrate the camp's manifold activities. The first editor of the former was Mr T. A. Barton, who had once been on the sub-editorial staff of a London evening paper. The editor of the *Ruhleben Camp Magazine* was Mr Filmore, a barrister-at-law, who, after his return to England, held a post in the Ministry of Pensions. What differences of policy the editors may have been pursuing, I do not know;

but the visible characteristics of the two papers do not seem widely opposed. Both were illustrated, and always light in tone and touch—always, one may say, modern. They took few things *au grand sérieux*; and they affected short paragraphs, caricatures, and humorous sketches. Probably one could get from them, better than from any book, an impression of the life of the camp, and the tone which ran through it.

The standard naturally varies; but, on the whole, it is wonderfully high, though brevity had sometimes to be exaggerated to the point of scrappiness. Both the caricatures and the more serious essays in portraiture reach a high level of excellence, as indeed one might have expected in view of the number of artists and art students in the camp. The prevalent note of these, as of the literary contributions, is one of persiflage. It exhibits our British habit of chaffing ourselves and each other in the midst of our most serious efforts. The most serious efforts, indeed, are those chaffed most persistently. About sport some of the contributors write as gravely as bishops and deans write about religion; but their attitude towards the educational activities seems generally that of undergraduates rather than dons. Indeed, it might be said that the Ruhleben magazines are more like the *Isis* and the *Granta* than any other British model.

Much of the humour, of course, is of local interest, revealing its full flavour only to local readers; but one must not be deterred from quoting a few examples,

even if an explanation of a joke has sometimes to be given. To see the point of the following, for instance, the reader must turn back to the chapters on the medical history of the camp. He will then perceive that the alleged advertisement is the vehicle of a well-merited testimonial :—

OLD DOCTOR LAMBERT'S SCHONUNGS ELIXIR. *Guaranteed to get sufferers, no matter how robust, into the Schonungs Barrack! Thousands of testimonials. 'Grateful' writes: 'For years I had a red face and hearty appetite and used to eat three meals a day, and was glad to get them. After taking a box of your elixir I turned white, and suffered from indigestion and furry tongue, and obtained admission to Schonungs Barrack, where I am happy and comfortable! Am recommending your Elixir to my mates.'—Many more! Apply on premises.*—(ADVT.).

Some Limericks, too—Ruhlimericks they called them—will be fairly intelligible. This, on the food shortage, for instance :—

A box-mate of mine once said 'Stew
I get sick of, so dish up in lieu
A piece of old rope,
A tablet of soap,
And call the d——d stuff a *ragout!*'

The Ruhlimericks are anonymous; and a majority of the contributions are either unsigned or only initialled.

One is violating no confidence, however, is saying that the best of them were commonly attributed to Mr L. E. Filmore; and one of the best of them—a parody published in the very first number—is acknowledged by its author. The first few lines will suffice to show that Mr Filmore has the real gift of parody.

All the world's a cage,
And all the men within it weary players;
They have no exits, only entrances,
Where each spends many months e'er he departs.
At first the New-comer
With china bowl and palliasse of straw,
And apprehensive mien, as who would say,
'What cruel lot has fate for me in store?'
And then the Student, with his cloth-bound Otto. . . .

And then there is that other parody: 'Alice through the Lager Glass,' which looks as if it might be by the same author, though it appears unsigned. Alice, of course, is shown over the camp, and asks intelligent questions; and her guides, in answering them, break into poetry which sounds familiar. Here is the first picture, reviving memories of Trafalgar Square:—

'A number of men stood at the foot of the lamp-post, smoking and watching the trains, which could just be seen if one looked over the entrance gate. They were just like any other trains, but the men

(although quite grown up) stood and watched them as though they were a new invention.'

Then, in place of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Alice meets Optimum and Pessimee—two very familiar types; and Optimum breaks into poetry. It is poetry which recalls the Walrus and the Carpenter, and it guys the great Ruhleben educational movement :—

> The Pupil and the Pedagogue
> Were walking hand in hand :
> They wept like anything to see
> The idlers on the Stand.
> 'If they would only come to School,'
> They said, 'It would be grand.'

> 'If seven men with books and maps
> Taught them for half a year,
> Do you suppose,' the Scholar said,
> 'Their heads would be more clear?'
> 'I doubt it,' said the Pedagogue;
> 'They're much too fond of beer.'

And then Alice is presented to Father William, —'a cheerful old fellow and somewhat garrulous'— being, in fact, one of those forty-fivers whose hopes were so often deferred. We will give the first and last stanzas of the piece delivered in that connection from the top of a packing-case :—

'You are old, Father William,' the young man said,
'For your years number forty and five;
And yet you incessantly write home for bread—
Do you think it will ever arrive?'
'We all have our fancies,' the old man replied,
'Which comfort a prisoner's brain;
And although you may scoff, and my postcards deride,
I shall write them again and again.'

'You are old,' said the youth, 'can you indicate where
On the scroll of the Future is written
The date when, again a free man, you prepare
To return to your home in Great Britain?'
'I am old, it is true,' was the sage's reply,
As round him fierce glances he darted,
'But don't, for one instant, imagine that I
Ever have been, or shall be downhearted.'

They are bright little pieces, eloquent of the Mark Tapleyism which the camp never failed to cultivate, and calculated to provoke Oliver Twistism on the part of the reader. But the reader who asks for more will have some difficulty in satisfying his appetite; for the issues were limited, and are out of print, and may be expected to fetch considerable sums at book auctions in the years to come.

Both magazines were illustrated; and the illustrations were not their least attractive feature. Art, indeed, may be said to have been more strongly represented in the camp than either literature or journalism.

Several portrait painters were included among the interned, the best known of them being Mr Charles Horsfall, whose portrait of Lord Kitchener has been much admired. Later came Mr Nico Jungman, Dutch by birth, but a naturalised British subject, captured in the autumn of 1916 on the *Koningin Regentes*. Mr Dresel, of the American Embassy, first announced his arrival, and asked that special arrangements should be made to enable him to carry on his artistic work in the camp. That was done; and Mr Jungman painted, among other things, a splendid panorama of the camp, which he has since presented to the Imperial War Museum. Altogether, when the hour of repatriation struck, he was able to take home about eighty pictures painted at Ruhleben. All of them were shown at the Ruhleben Exhibition; and a number of them were purchased for the War Museum.

Other artists whose work ought to be mentioned were Messrs O'Sullivan-Moloney, Goodchild, Winzer, Wiggins (the official starter of the Belgian Jockey Club), Wade, Molyneux, Walker, and Wood. A shed, transformed into a studio, was destroyed in the Whitechapel fire in 1916, and, unfortunately, was not insured; but a loan from the civil administration made it possible to erect a larger and better studio. Many exhibitions were held in the camp; and a gentleman who had a great deal to do with the success of the studio was Mr Hotopf, whose work as a designer of programmes was highly appreciated.

CHAPTER XX

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR—THE NETHERLANDS LEGATION TAKES CHARGE OF BRITISH INTERESTS—THE REVISION OF THE CAMP CONSTITUTION—ELECTION OF A CAPTAIN OF THE CAMP AND A CAMP COUNCIL

THE history of the camp as a whole has had to give way to separate histories of its departmental activities; but, as the end of the narrative approaches, these, in their turn, must yield to the events which concerned all departments equally. One such event is the declaration of war by the United States; another is the revision of the constitution of the camp.

'The former change' (writes Mr Powell), 'was naturally anticipated with some anxiety. The interests of the camp, it was clear, would pass into other diplomatic hands. Would those hands be as strong, as competent, as sympathetic? Those were the questions which loomed up towards the end of January, 1917. Happily we were not long in doubt that they were to receive a satisfactory answer. It was announced that the Netherlands Minister would succeed the American Ambassador as the representative of British interests; and Mr Jackson presented me to Baron Gevers.

'Mr Jones, whom I have already mentioned as working at the Embassy, was transferred to the Legation, as were also two others of the interned: Mr

Harold Sheldon, one of National Radiator Company's accountants, who had previously done excellent work in the camp as secretary of the captains' committee, and Mr Robert Brown, a most competent stenographer and typist, who had also, for a period, rendered good service in the same capacity. Between them, they could be relied upon to give a British complexion to a new and friendly environment; and that environment became positively homelike when it was arranged that the British Section of the Netherlands Legation should have its headquarters in the British Embassy. The very porter, though a German, could be regarded as a friend, for he had been in the service of the Embassy for twenty years, and had, during the war, most faithfully discharged his duties as a caretaker. And what a joy to find the Dutch Minister working, with British supporters, in the very room which the British Ambassador used to occupy, and to see E. VII. stamped on one of the great leather arm-chairs!

'Nor was there any question that the Dutch were taking the obligations which they had accepted as seriously as the Americans. They appointed as a special Minister to look after British interests, Baron Vredenburgh: a most happy appointment, seeing that it was Baron Vredenburgh who, within a few months, had arranged and presided at the first meeting held at the Hague for the discussion between British and German delegates of certain questions concerning prisoners of war. Soon after the Convention then drawn up came into operation, he was transferred to

Stockholm; and his successor, Ridder van Rappard, efficiently assisted by Jonkheer Snouck Hurgronje, Dr Roemer, and Dr Herxsta, was our uniformly helpful and sympathetic friend.

'Fortunately one can thank and praise the Dutch without instituting any invidious comparisons between their work and that of the Americans; but it is just to say that their business-like methods aroused general admiration and produced good results; and it is interesting to be able to add that their British assistants acquired, under their direction, a greater influence than they had previously enjoyed. The looming in sight of the inevitable end may have been a factor in producing that result; and the language question may also have counted for something. The Dutch, of course, were dealing with our affairs in a foreign language, whereas the Americans had been dealing with them in their own language. However that may have been, one had more and more the impression, as time went on, that a certain important section of British interests, though nominally in neutral hands, had really come under British control. There certainly was nothing to destroy that impression in Mr Jones's diplomatic manner.'

The date of the revision of the camp constitution was July, 1918; and it will be remarked with interest that whereas, in the early days, most of the arrangements entered into were tentative and provisional—based upon the assumption that the war might come

to an end at any moment—the decisions taken when the end was really near at hand were of a far-reaching completeness, which apparently indicated an expectation that both the war and the camp would last for ever. The matter, however, is another of those on which it is best that Mr Powell should speak *in propria persona*, as he alone of the collaborators was in Ruhleben at the time and personally concerned with it.

'Already,' Mr Powell writes, 'in the autumn of 1917, the question of reconstruction was faced. The Captains' Committee had grown to be very large; and large committees are too much like debating societies to be satisfactory administrative instruments. I had many conversations on the subject with Mr G. F. Fisher, who was then vice-captain of the camp; and we had decided, early in October, to put before the Captains' Committee a scheme providing for the election of a small committee of management—a Camp Council, in fact—to assume a position broadly corresponding to that of the War Cabinet in England.

'Unfortunately for myself, I was taken seriously ill at the end of the month. I gather, from the minutes of the Captains' Committee which I have since read, that I was worse than I knew, and that my recovery was, for some time, doubtful. I did recover, however, and was given sick leave at the sanatorium; and my absence from the camp lasted until May, 1918. On my return I found that the Captains' Committee had grown to still greater dimensions, and that although a special committee—also too large for convenience—

had been formed for the purpose of working out a scheme of reorganisation, no definite proposals had yet been drafted.

'A crisis came at the end of July. In consequence of certain questions which arose as to the management of the dental surgery, I handed in my resignation; and a legal committee was, almost immediately afterwards, asked to draft new articles of constitution for the camp.

'This was done. The new articles were accepted by the camp, the German military authorities, and the Netherlands Legation acting on behalf of the British Government; and as a constitution for prisoners of war, drawn up by the prisoners themselves, is a unique thing in the history of war, I think I ought to print the document at length. It has been printed nowhere else; and it ought to be on record, even if some readers prefer to skip it.

DRAFT ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION FOR RUHLEBEN CAMP

1. All powers of administration which have been or may be handed over to the interned by the Military Authorities, or are otherwise vested in the interned, shall be conducted by or through a council to be called the 'Ruhleben Camp Council,' hereinafter referred to as 'the Council.'

2. The Council shall consist of five members, of whom one shall be the captain of the camp, to be

elected by the interned, and four other members to be elected together by the interned. All elections shall be conducted in conformity with the rules specified in the First Schedule hereto.

3. The first Council shall be elected as soon as may be after these articles have been approved by the Camp, the Military Authorities, and the Netherlands Legation, and every twelve months after the date of the first election, all five members (who shall be eligible for re-election) shall retire and a new election to the vacancies shall be held.

4. The Camp may at any time by a petition in writing, signed by not less than one-third of the Camp, presented to the Chairman of the Council, call upon the Council to resign. The Council shall thereupon resign and a new election shall be held.

5. When elected, the Council shall appoint (not from among its members) one person to be Camp Treasurer, and one person to be Camp Secretary. These persons shall sit with the Council, but without a vote. The appointment of the Camp Treasurer shall be subject to the approval of the Netherlands Legation. Proper minutes shall be kept, which shall be open to the inspection of any member of the Camp.

6. The Council shall be responsible to the Camp, the Netherlands Legation, the British Government, and the Military Authorities for all matters which concern those parties respectively, that is to say, the Council shall be responsible (*a*) to the Camp for the proper administration of all such matters as are properly

the affairs of the interned, and (*b*) to the Netherlands Legation, the British Government, and the Military Authorities for the proper administration of those matters for which the Netherlands Legation, the British Government, and the Military Authorities respectively notify the Council that they will hold it responsible.

7. In order to enable the Council to undertake these responsibilities, all public activities, all private activities occupying public space and all working committees in the camp, without exception, shall be subject to the Council (save that, as to such powers and duties as are, or may be, specially entrusted to any committee or body by an authority outside the Camp, the Council shall not interfere therewith). In its control of those activities and working committees the Council shall respect the Constitutions of those activities which have constitutions (whether written or unwritten) and shall respect the precedents of those working committees where precedents are proved to exist. It shall, however, be the duty of the Council to make such suggestions for the abolition, amalgamation, reform, or alteration of, or in the business of any public activity or working committees as the Council shall consider to be in the interest of the Camp; and shall prohibit any proposed expenditure by any such public activity or committee, if in the opinion of the Council such expenditure would be inexpedient. If such suggestions are not acceptable to an activity or a committee, the Council shall offer to hear representatives from such activity or committee before exercising its powers.

8. Each Barrack shall elect a Captain forthwith, who shall manage the Barrack in the best interests of the Barrack, and shall carry out the duties entrusted to him by the Military Authorities and the Council. Every Barrack Captain shall submit himself to re-election every year. The Barrack Captains shall meet together and form a committee to be called the 'Barrack Representatives' Committee.'

9. All working committees and committees of public activities shall (by submission of minutes or other means to be agreed upon by the parties concerned) keep the Council informed of all their business and transactions, and shall make such suggestions to the Council as they consider advisable.

10. In matters of finance, the Council shall be responsible (*a*) to the Netherlands Legation, and (*b*) to the Camp for the proper administration of those funds which are accumulated by the various trading departments in the camp (the public activities engaged in trading with the interned including therein the Entertainments Committee). The Council shall have power to transfer surplus profits of any such trading department to any other activity or department, provided it receive the recommendation thereto of the Finance Committee hereinafter mentioned.

Notwithstanding Article 7 hereof, all public and private bodies holding as trustees funds banked with the Camp Treasurer shall be permitted to have their respective trust funds administered in accordance with the terms of the trust or trusts upon which they are



The Captain of the Camp and the Camp Council: Names from left to right:—
J. Powell, Captain Woolner, Captain Thomson, H. Redmayne, F. Bell.

held, provided always that the public bodies shall nevertheless be subject to the power of prohibition of any expenditure as mentioned in Article 7 hereof.

Proper accounts shall be kept by the Camp Treasurer and a proper system of auditing maintained, the nature of which accounts and auditing is more particularly specified in the Second Schedule hereto.

The accounts of the Council shall be audited by two auditors, one of whom shall be appointed by the Council and the other shall be appointed by the Finance Committee. These appointments shall be made annually. The Council shall appoint a Finance Committee whose duty it shall be to advise the Council in matters of finance. No expenditure of a new nature shall be incurred by any public body subject to these articles of constitution without previous reference to the Finance Committee. Vacancies on the Finance Committee shall be filled as they occur by co-option.

11. The Captain of the Camp and (or) other person or persons appointed by the Council to be intermediary between the Council and the Netherlands Legation, the Military Authorities, and any other body or person, shall carry out such mandates as are entrusted to him or them by the Council and shall faithfully report to the Council upon all business and transactions between himself or themselves and the Netherlands Legation, the Military Authorities, or any other body or person. When required by the Council, the report shall be in writing.

12. These articles of constitution may be amended

in the following manner at the instigation of (*a*) 200 persons by signed notice in writing to the Camp Secretary, or (*b*) the Council :—

(1) The proposed amendment together with a copy of the existing articles of Constitution shall be posted on the official notice-board of the Camp.

(2) If within seven days of the posting thereof no objection is handed in to the Camp Secretary, the proposed amendment shall be deemed to be accepted and shall come into operation forthwith.

(3) If within the said seven days an objection is so handed in, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the members of the Camp and a ballot taken.

(4) Receipt by the Camp Secretary of written objections or signification of unwillingness to accept the proposed amendment accompanied by the signatures of 100 members of the Camp shall be deemed an objection within the meaning of this Article.

SCHEDULE I

RULES FOR ELECTIONS

1. Every member of the Camp is eligible as a candidate or as proposer or seconder of a candidate for election, or as a voter under this constitution.

2. When it is intended to elect a Captain of the Camp, or to fill one place on the Council—

(*a*) A period of two days shall be fixed within which nominations will be received.

(*b*) Candidates must be nominated.

(*c*) If, at the expiration of a period of two days, only one candidate has been nominated, he shall be declared elected.

(*d*) If two or more candidates have been nominated, a poll shall be taken.

(*e*) At each poll at least two days' notice of time and place of the poll, together with the names of the candidates, shall be published in each barrack; each voter shall have one vote, and the voting shall be by ballot.

(*f*) If only two candidates have been nominated, the candidate who receives the most votes shall be declared elected.

(*g*) In the event of more than two candidates being nominated, if the candidate at the top of the poll has received more votes than the combined polled votes of the other candidates, he shall be declared elected; otherwise a second poll shall be taken between the two candidates at the top of the poll in the manner provided in sub-sections (*e*) and (*f*) above.

(*h*) In the event of there being a tie, the returning officer shall have a casting vote.

3. When it is intended to elect a Council or to fill vacancies on the Council,

(*a*) A period of two days shall be fixed within which nominations will be received.

(*b*) Candidates must be nominated.

(*c*) If at the expiration of two days, only as many candidates have been nominated as there are places to fill, those candidates who have been nominated shall be declared elected.

(*d*) If more candidates have been nominated than there are places to fill, a poll shall be taken.

(*e*) At each poll at least two days' notice of the time and place of the poll, together with the names of the candidates, shall be published in each barrack; each voter shall have as many votes as there are places to fill, but no voter shall give more than one vote to any one candidate. Voting shall be by ballot.

(*f*) The vacancies shall be filled by those candidates who have received the most votes at the poll.

(*g*) In the event of there being a tie, the returning officer shall have a casting vote.

4. Nominations shall be handed in at the appointed place, shall be in writing, and shall contain the signed consent of the candidate to stand, the signatures and camp addresses of proposer, seconder, and five supporters.

SCHEDULE II

FINANCE

A. *Accounts*

1. The Council shall cause true accounts to be kept

(*a*) Of the monies received and expended directly

by it, and of the monies received and expended by the public activities and working committees.

(*b*) Of the assets and liabilities of the Council and of the public activities and working committees.

2. The books of account and other documents shall be kept at the place or places which the Council shall appoint, and shall be open to the inspection of any member of the camp upon application at a time to be appointed by the Council.

3. At the end of each quarter a balance sheet and revenue account shall be drawn up, and the Camp Treasurer shall report thereon in writing to the Council.

2. The Council shall forthwith cause an inventory to be prepared of all items of buildings, plant, furniture, fittings, and other property existing in the Camp (excluding military and private property) with the cost price of such items; which inventory shall be revised each year, and a summary published in the Camp.

B. *Audit.*

1. The quarterly accounts of the Council shall be submitted to the auditors for audit.

2. The auditors shall examine the accounts and report thereon.

3. The auditors' report or reports, together with the accounts signed by the Camp Treasurer and by two

members of the Council, shall be published on the official notice-board of the Camp, and the report or reports shall state :—

(*a*) Whether or not the auditors have obtained the information and explanations which they have required.

(*b*) Whether the balance sheet is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Camp's affairs according to the best of their information and the explanations given to them and as shown by the books of the Council.

4. The auditors shall have a right of access at all times to the books, accounts, vouchers, and other documents of the Council, and of the activities and working committees, and shall be entitled to inquire from the members, officials, and servants of the Council, and of the committee of any activity and of any working committee and from any other public servant in the camp, such information and explanations as may be necessary for the performance of the duties of auditors.

'The articles, it will be seen, provided for the holding of an election; and arrangements for the election were immediately made—the Y.M.C.A. hut serving as a polling booth, and being furnished with a separate table for each barrack. It was an election conducted quite on the lines of a Parliamentary election at home, with public meetings, posters, and flags. A number

of these were on view at the Ruhleben Exhibition in the Central Hall, Westminster; and it may be added, as an illustration of the new feeling which was abroad, that a flag, with a conspicuous Union Jack on it, was actually carried on the working carts by sailors on one of the roads outside the camp.

'A petition, signed by about 1000 sailors, requested me to stand for the office of captain; and I was nominated by Captain Pow, a Master Mariner, and Mr Fred Pentland, the international footballer. The following were the figures shown at the declaration of the poll:—

CAPTAIN OF THE CAMP

Powell	1,339
Blagden	404
Majority ..	935

COUNCIL.

Thompson	1,227
Woolner	1,215
Redmayne	1,208
H. A. Bell	1,104

'Messrs Thompson and Woolner were master mariners. Mr Redmayne was a chartered accountant; Mr Bell was a manufacturer from Lille. All these gentlemen had very hard work during the fortnight which followed the revolution; all of them voluntarily remained in

the camp till the last, though Captain Thompson and Mr Bell had the right to return to England with the first batch repatriated, if they had cared to do so. I have not had the pleasure of seeing either of them since our arrival and dispersal; but I seize this opportunity of tendering my most cordial thanks for efficient co-operation to them, and to many other voluntary workers too numerous to mention by name. Indeed, I must thank the whole Camp, including those who would have preferred another captain, for loyal support in the difficult days in which any failure of internal harmony might have had deplorable consequences.'

CHAPTER XXI

GERMAN OPTIMISM AND BRITISH SCEPTICISM—FAILING GERMAN MORAL—OUTBREAK OF THE GERMAN REVOLUTION—RELATIONS OF THE CAMP COUNCIL WITH THE SOLDIERS' COUNCIL—FORMATION OF AN EMERGENCY SQUAD AND ENLISTMENT OF SPECIAL CONSTABLES—NEWS OF THE ARMISTICE—ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPATRIATION—TRIPS TO BERLIN—EVIDENCE OF GERMAN DISTRESS—BRITISH SAILORS PRIZE THE NAILS OUT OF THE HINDENBURG STATUE—OFF AT LAST—INCIDENTS OF THE JOURNEY—HOME

CONFIDENT expectation that the war would end in the full triumph of England never failed at Ruhleben. Indeed, the tone of the camp throughout may be said to have been fairly well reflected in the prediction of the sailor, quoted in an earlier chapter, that the Germans would find themselves 'a hundred miles the other side of hell' before England had 'done with them'; and when Baron von Taube posted arrogant placards giving inaccurate lists of British ships which German submarines were alleged to have sunk, scepticism was openly expressed in very derisive language. 'There was a cow that climbed a tree,' was the refrain of a song sung on those occasions in front of the notice-board.

At the same time, the course of military operations was cheerfully and intelligently followed on large scale maps. Nominally those maps were forbidden; but the prohibition soon became a dead letter. After

a while, they were openly affixed to the walls in barrack corridors; and German officers used to come in and study them, deploring their inability to obtain maps equally good for their own use. The shifting of the little flags during the days of the great March offensive naturally moved some of them to vainglorious comments, but no British spirits were damped by their remarks, and there came, of course, a date in July after which their buoyant hopes gave way to anxiety and gloom, and they realised as well as we did that Ludendorff's gambler's throw was a failure, and that nothing remained doubtful about the issue except the hour at which the sponge would have to be thrown up.

And then—and even earlier—there came to us increasingly circumstantial reports of the declining moral of the German people, and the spread of disaffection in the German forces.

A good deal of significant information was brought to the camp by a German sailor from Kiel. He had been one of the crew of the raider *Wolff*, and he came to Ruhleben to see a British sailor captured by that vessel, with whom he had made acquaintance while on board of her. He spoke very openly. Asked whether he expected to go raiding again, he replied that there would be no such luck for him. He expected to be transferred to a submarine, and he did not relish the prospect. 'I don't mean to sail,' he said, 'and they won't get any of us to sail. You've beaten the submarines, and we're sick of the whole business.'

Strange stories, too, were told of the defiance of

discipline by the men in the trenches. Officers, one was assured, could only get their men over the top by telling them that there was no food in Germany, but plenty of it in the French and British depots; and there were queer tales of the proceedings at German Church parades. Army chaplains who prayed for the Kaiser, and Hindenburg, and Ludendorff, were said to have been shouted down. There was no need, men cried, to pray for any one who was so careful to keep out of harm's way. Consequently, no surprise was felt when, on November 6, 1919—exactly four years after the date of the internment—the rumours of impending revolution were confirmed.

'On November 7,' writes Mr Powell, 'I had to go to Berlin to arrange for the departure of a number of sick men who were to be transferred to Holland in accordance with the terms of the agreement entered into between the two belligerents. Proceeding, in the course of the afternoon, to the Silesian railway station, for the purpose of buying the tickets and registering the baggage, I lighted upon an unusually animated scene. Soldiers, with machine guns, were on guard outside the station; soldiers on guard at the main entrance were requiring every one in uniform to show his pass. I, as a civilian, walked through without hindrance; but the booking-office was closed. I discovered the station master, and asked him what I was to do. He was in a state of great excitement, and gave me very short answers, but finally told me that no trains were running on the Hanover line, and

that the Kiel sailors had mutinied and were on their way to Berlin.

'Obviously there was nothing to be done; so I went to the automatic telephone office and rang up the Ruhleben Commandantur—a long queue most courteously giving me precedence when I stated my nationality and explained my business. I was told by the camp officer that the departure of the invalids was postponed, and that I had better return to the camp with the baggage. I did so, told my colleagues what I had seen and heard, and proceeded, with their help, to seek information from our garrison. Ascertaining that a soldier named Zirwes was the leader of the movement in the camp, I looked him up and questioned him; and after some persuasion, he confided his plans to me.

'On the following day (Friday, November 8), after the officers had left the camp, a Soldiers' Council was to be elected. On the Saturday, at noon, an ultimatum was to be presented to the officers: they must take off their epaulettes, be content with the same food as the men, etc. Zirwes added that there would be no unnecessary violence, as the Ruhleben soldiers were not Independent but Majority Socialists, that they recognised that we had been badly treated, and intended to protect us to the utmost of their ability.

'That, no doubt, was very amiable of him, but it did not eliminate the element of danger. We were close to Spandau, which is the German Woolwich Arsenal. Food was scarce at Spandau; and it was well known

at Spandau that food was plentiful at Ruhleben. Suppose the Spandau mob set out to rush and loot the camp—what would then be the attitude of the soldiers? Would they side with the mob, or with us?

'I put that point to Zirwes, and he seemed very dubious. His men might remain at their posts, or they might walk away and leave us to our own resources. In short, he could not answer for them; so the Camp Council met and decided that we must take our own precautions with a view to the emergency.

'We took them. There were in the camp about twenty of the Old Contemptibles, captured behind the lines, in plain clothes, early in the war. These, together with Mr R. L. Brown, who had been training before the war in a military college, formed an Emergency Squad. They kept watch, night and day, outside the German Guard House, with instructions that, if the German soldiers deserted their posts, they were instantly to seize all the arms and ammunition and organise a defensive force. At the same time, Captain Alcide, our inspector of police, enlisted about a hundred special constables.

'The Soldiers' Council, having been informed of what we were doing, approved of it; and though the specials had been intended to patrol only inside the camp, they were frequently invited to do sentry-go outside also, though they did not carry arms, and were there simply for the purpose of reporting any unforeseen occurrence.

'On the Saturday the revolution took place according to plan. The officers, or some of them, were invited

to join the revolution, but refused. One of them—the notorious Amelunxen—would certainly have suffered violence if he had not precipitately taken to flight; and the Commandant's aide-de-camp, young Count Schwerin, came to the captain's office, as I have already related, and bade us a tearful farewell, saying with a sob in his throat that he was glad his father had not lived to see that day, as he would certainly have blown his brains out rather than submit to degradation, and that though it was unlikely that the tides of circumstance would ever bring us together again, he hoped, etc., etc. And then came a soldier, asking if we could help the revolution with the loan of a red flag. We asked if a Union Jack would do instead; but they had not quite come to that; so the dyeing class of our Woollen and Worsted Society took the matter in hand. They dyed a table cloth red, and presented it to the Soldiers' Council; and as the soldiers did not know how to hoist it, Captain Thompson hoisted it for them.

'That ceremony accomplished, Count Schwerin's carriage and pair was brought out, decorated with red flags, and a member of the Soldiers' Council invited me to accompany him to Berlin. He drove me to the Reichstag, where I was to obtain a pass enabling me to go freely about the city, negotiating for our repatriation. Again and again we were held up; but the Ruhleben soldier's explanation always sufficed to get us past a barrier. While the pass was being made out, I heard the noise of firing in the

streets, looked out, and saw a battle royal proceeding —machine-guns firing at the windows of houses near the Brandenburger Thor; but there was no serious impediment to our progress to the British Embassy buildings, where we were welcomed by Ridder van Rappart, who promised to telegraph to England that, in spite of the revolution, Ruhleben still stood where it did, and all Ruhlebenites were safe and well. Then I returned to the camp with the latest news, and warned men not to attempt to go sight-seeing for the moment, as such excursions would be dangerous.

'Our first news of the terms of the armistice reached us on Sunday, November 10. We immediately had them typed and reproduced on the Roneo machine, so that men might know at once that provision had been made for their immediate repatriation. Then I proceeded again to Berlin, and visited the War Office, in order to arrange the earliest possible date for our departure. The officials there professed their willingness to help; but everything was in great disorder, rolling stock was hard to get hold of, and a certain delay was inevitable; and this time of waiting was, no doubt, to many men the most interesting in the history of the camp.

'Every one, of course, was eager to visit Berlin and have a look at the revolution; and there was little to hinder any one from doing so. It was given out that prisoners with friends in Berlin might apply for permits to visit them; and the queue of applicants was the longest queue that Ruhleben had ever seen.

But that process was too tedious for the impatient; and it was soon discovered, not only that any soldier in the camp would sell a permit for a pot of dripping, but that there was no great difficulty in climbing over the barbed wire while the sentries were looking the other way. A few men, I believe, were fired at while doing so; but no one was hit, and I imagine that the inaccuracy of the aim was intentional and the shot merely a pointed hint that a pot of dripping was a sentry's perquisite.

'Consequently Berlin, in the days of the Revolution, was full of British tourists. Outside the Legation, I had to answer nearly as many questions as I had been accustomed to answer outside the captains' office—questions of the sort commonly put to the guides of Messrs Cook's or Lunn's personally conducted parties. What was the way to the Reichstag, the Royal Palace, the Siegesallee? Where was the Hindenburg statue? Could one still get a good dinner at the Hotel Adlon? Which was the best café in the neighbourhood, etc? It was a new and unexpected rôle for me.

'Knowing what they did about the state of the German food supplies, the trippers brought their own provisions; and these made them welcome visitors whom every one was anxious to oblige. High as the prices were, a very little food would buy any quantity of wine or beer; and a tin of cocoa was an effective key for the opening of any door. Men were given to understand that it would be regarded as a favour if they would help to loot the Kaiser's palace and work

their will on Hindenburg's monstrous wooden image. Souvenirs of both these enterprises have found their way to England—the Kaiser's paper-weight, I believe, among other articles; and his Majesty the King was presented at the Ruhleben Exhibition with a selection of nails from the Hindenburg idol—prized out of it by a merchant seaman with a jack-knife.

'To these days, too, belong many stories demonstrative of the distress to which Germany had been reduced by the blockade. Things may have been better in some other parts of the country than they were in Berlin; but there they certainly were awful. Starving children crowded round the camp, begging for chocolate and biscuits. Their elders were hardly less clamorous; and one young friend has given me a remarkable account of a visit which he paid to German acquaintances living in the Grünwald, which is one of the wealthy Berlin suburbs.

'They were well-to-do people, with friends in high places, and friends in the country; and he supposed that they, at any rate, must have found a means of keeping the wolf at a reasonable distance from the door; but the lady of the house told him that frequently she and her children had spent the day in bed because there was no food in the larder. He was moved to pity. "Is it as bad as that?" he said. "Then I must see what I can do for you"; and he hurried back to Ruhleben, filled a suit-case with food from his private store, and returned to the villa. Then he proceeded to unpack the suit-case, laying out tinned meat,

condensed milk, jam, margarine, and similar things on the dining-room table; and his friend, the Justizrat, instantly ran to the window and drew the blind.

'"We mustn't let that be seen," he said. "If any one saw it, the house would be rushed within a minute."

'Meanwhile we got on as fast as we could with the arrangements for our repatriation. It was not merely a question of moving men. A vast amount of baggage had also to be conveyed; a large sum of money had to be remitted; and some of the prisoners had wives and children in Germany whom they wished to accompany them. Great assistance was rendered in collecting the latter by Fraülein Dr Rotten, of Berlin—a lady who had, at one time, been a teacher of German at Cambridge; and a great number of them, gathered together from all parts of Germany, were brought to Ruhleben, and housed for the night in Barrack XXIII. The luggage, which was too bulky to be treated as hand baggage, was deposited, under the direction of Mr Aubrey Hersee, in the Y.M.C.A. Hall. Receipts for about 4000 different items were given; and Mr Wolff, manager of the Netherlands State Railways, on the instructions of Ridder van Rapport, undertook to remove it from the camp, and have it stored and insured until we could arrange for its despatch to England, where practically all of it has been delivered at the moment of writing. The money difficulty was solved, in so far as it was soluble, by negotiations with the Legation; and Mr Charles Margerison, the camp

treasurer, with many volunteer assistants, worked night and day, giving receipts for deposits.

'At last, everything was ready and in order; and I may add that, knowing the ropes, and knowing the people with whom we had to deal, and being helped, with consistent efficiency, by the British Section of the Dutch Legation, we had no need to lean upon the representatives of the British Red Cross of Copenhagen, who came to Berlin to co-operate with us. The first train started for Sassnitz on November 22; the second and last, two days later. Our port was Sassnitz, whence we were to proceed to Leith; but the boat provided had accommodation for 600 only of the 1200 men in the second party. Captain Thompson, Mr Bell, and I remained, therefore, billeted in private houses, with the 600 until November 27, when we were able to embark on the butter boat, *Count Bernstorff*.

'My last vision of the camp—that significant spectacle of the President of the Soldiers' Council staggering under a load of looted food—has already been described; but there was one other scene, not less significant, with which I may conclude the story.

'It was at the first station at which the train stopped—a battered and war-worn old train, with all the leather fittings removed, all the cushions cut about, and most of the glass of most of the windows broken. I got out and walked up the platform to see that every one was as comfortable as circumstances permitted; and I found that one carriage had been transfigured into a passable imitation of a

compartment in a *train de luxe.* I asked for an explanation, and I was given one.

'The passengers were mostly public school men. The train having been drawn up outside the camp on the evening before our departure, they had inspected it and reserved this particular carriage for themselves. Having reserved it, they had arranged that each of them should bring something useful, so that they might furnish it comfortably. They had brought blankets, to be hung as curtains, and keep out the cold. They had brought provisions, a stove, a stove-pipe, a quantity of fuel, and a set of tools. As soon as the train started, they had erected the stove, bored a hole in the roof through which to thrust the stove-pipe, lighted their fire, and set to work to cook their meal. When I thrust my head in at the window, they were eating it.

'Thus the men who had begun by turning a German swamp into a British city, ended by turning a German railway carriage into a British kitchen and dining-room. I feel that the curtain cannot be dropped on anything more typical.'

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